



Testimony of the Nursing Community Coalition
Prepared for the U.S. Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Health Resources and Services Administration & National Institutes of Health
June 1, 2018

Submitted by the Nursing Community Coalition

The Nursing Community Coalition is comprised of 59 national professional nursing associations that build consensus and advocate on a wide spectrum of healthcare issues that intersect education, research, practice, and regulation. Collectively, we represent over one million Registered Nurses (RNs), Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (including Certified Nurse-Midwives, Nurse Practitioners, Clinical Nurse Specialists, and Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists), nurse executives, nursing students, faculty, and researchers, as well as other nurses with advanced degrees. The Nursing Community Coalition commends Congress' investment to nursing education and research in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Consolidated Appropriations Act [P.L. 115-141]. To continue the forward progress this will enact, our organizations respectfully request **\$266 million for the Nursing Workforce Development Programs** (authorized under Title VIII of the *Public Health Service Act* [42 U.S.C. 296 et seq.]), administered by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), and **\$170 million for the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR)**, one of the 27 Institutes and Centers within the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in FY 2019.¹

Title VIII Programs: America's Patients Need Nursing Care

As integral members of the healthcare team, nurses collaborate with other professions and disciplines to improve the quality of America's healthcare system. RNs comprise the largest group of health professionals with almost four million licensed providers in the country.² A constant focus must be placed on education, recruitment, and retention to ensure a stable workforce as projections cite an impending shortage largely due to retirements within the profession.³ Investments must continue to be made in the education of new nurses and nurse faculty to ensure the nation will have access to the services it will demand for years to come, particularly in rural and underserved areas.

¹For FY 2019, the Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research is recommending at least \$39.3 billion for the NIH, including funds provided to the agency through the 21st Century Cures Act for targeted initiatives. The request level of \$170 million for NINR denotes the same percentage increase for NIH applied to NINR.

² National Council of State Boards of Nursing. (2018). *Active RN Licenses: A profile of nursing licensure in the U.S. as of April 18, 2018*. Retrieved from: <https://www.ncsbn.org/6161.htm>.

³ "In 2015, the nursing workforce lost 1.7 million experience-years [due to retirees]." Buerhaus, Peter I., Skinner, Lucy E., Auerbach, David I., Saiger, Douglas O. et al. 2017. *Four Challenges Facing the Nursing Workforce in the United States*. Journal of Nursing Regulation. Volume 8, Issue 2, pp. 40-46.

According to HRSA, there were over 84.3 million individuals living in Health Professional Shortage Areas as of December 2017.⁴ The Title VIII programs provide nursing students and practicing nurses exposure to caring for underserved communities, which helps to bolster recruitment and retention in these areas. In academic year 2015-2016, a total of 3,034 nursing students were supported by the Advanced Education Nursing Traineeship, 59% of which were serving in medically underserved communities.⁵ Of the 2,491 nurse anesthetist students supported by the Nurse Anesthetists Traineeship, 70% received clinical training in medically underserved communities in the 2015-2016 academic year.⁵

Additionally, the Title VIII NURSE Corps Loan Repayment and Scholarship Programs assist students who agree to serve at least three years in facilities experiencing a critical shortage of nurses.⁵ In FY 2016, 55% of recipients extended their service contracts to work in these facilities beyond the required three years.⁵ Clearly, these programs are instrumental to connecting current and future providers to patient populations most in need.

The Nursing Community respectfully requests \$266 million for the Nursing Workforce Development programs in FY 2019, which include the following:

- Advanced Nursing Education Program (Sec. 811), including the Advanced Education Nursing Traineeships and Nurse Anesthetist Traineeships
- Nursing Workforce Diversity (Sec. 821)
- Nurse Education, Practice, Quality, and Retention (Sec. 831)
- NURSE Corps Loan Repayment and Scholarship Program (Sec. 846)
- Nurse Faculty Loan Program (Sec. 846A)
- Comprehensive Geriatric Education Program (Sec. 855)

National Institute of Nursing Research: Foundation for Evidence-Based Care

NINR funds research that lays the groundwork for evidence-based nursing practice. NINR examines ways to improve care models to deliver safe, high-quality, and cost-effective health services. Research funded through NINR stands with the larger research community by focusing on national level issues such as precision health and the opioid crisis. One of NINR's recently featured research studies focused on the relationship between opioid treatment and the rate of healing in chronic wounds. Notably, the study suggests that opioid use reduces immune activity, thus negatively impacting patients with chronic wounds.⁶ This type of timely research has implications that will drive the evidence-based care nurses, and other providers, deliver in the future.

⁴ U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration. (2018). *Designated Health Professional Shortage Areas Statistics*. Retrieved from: https://ersrs.hrsa.gov/ReportServer?/HGDW_Reports/BCD_HPSA/BCD_HPSA_SCR50_Qtr_Smry_HTML&rc:Toolbar=false.

⁵ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2018). *Health Resources and Services Administration Fiscal year 2018 Justification of Estimates for Appropriations Committees*. Retrieved from: <https://www.hrsa.gov/sites/default/files/hrsa/about/budget/budget-justification-2018.pdf>.

⁶ Shanmugam, V K, et al. "Relationship between Opioid Treatment and Rate of Healing in Chronic Wounds." *Advances in Pediatrics*, U.S. National Library of Medicine, Jan. 2017, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/27865036.

NINR's Strategic Plan includes the themes of: symptom science for patients with chronic illness and pain; wellness to prevent illness across conditions, settings, and the lifespan; patient self-management to improve quality of life; and end-of-life and palliative care science.⁶ Nursing science offers a unique lens in finding solutions as it considers healing and symptom management, as described in NINR's Strategic Plan. Moreover, NINR allots a generous portion of its budget towards training new nursing scientists, thus helping to sustain the longevity and success of nursing research. Training programs at NINR develop future nurse researchers, many of whom also serve as faculty in our nation's nursing schools.

The Nursing Community respectfully requests \$170 million for the NINR in FY 2019.

Continued increased investments in the Title VIII programs and NINR will strengthen the nation's health by bolstering the workforce and the science that is foundational to the care nurses provide across the country and in every community. Thank you for your support of these crucial programs.

Members of the Nursing Community Coalition Submitting this Testimony

Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses
American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing
American Academy of Nursing
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Association of Critical-Care Nurses
American Association of Heart Failure Nurses
American Association of Neuroscience Nurses
American Association of Nurse Anesthetists
American Association of Nurse Assessment Coordination
American Association of Nurse Practitioners
American College of Nurse-Midwives
American Nephrology Nurses Association
American Nurses Association
American Nursing Informatics Association
American Organization of Nurse Executives
American Pediatric Surgical Nurses Association
American Psychiatric Nurses Association
American Society for Pain Management Nursing
American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses
Association for Radiologic and Imaging Nursing
Association of Community Health Nursing Educators
Association of Nurses in AIDS Care
Association of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurses
Association of periOperative Registered Nurses

⁶ National Institutes of Health. National Institute of Nursing Research. *Implementing NINR's Strategic Plan: Key Themes*. Retrieved from: http://www.ninr.nih.gov/aboutninr/keythemes#.VRVhGWZ_SSU.

Association of Public Health Nurses
Association of Rehabilitation Nurses
Association of Veterans Affairs Nurse Anesthetists
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service
Dermatology Nurses' Association
Emergency Nurses Association
Friends of the National Institute of Nursing Research
Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association
Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association
Infusion Nurses Society
International Association of Forensic Nurses
International Society of Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurses
National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists
National Association of Neonatal Nurse Practitioners
National Association of Neonatal Nurses
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Association of School Nurses
National Black Nurses Association
National Council of State Boards of Nursing
National Forum of State Nursing Workforce Centers
National League for Nursing
National Nurse-Led Care Consortium
National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties
Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs
Oncology Nursing Society
Organization for Associate Degree Nursing
Pediatric Endocrinology Nursing Society
Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association
Society of Pediatric Nurses
Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nurses Society