



## Oregon Nurses on Strategic Healthcare Boards Proposal

The delivery of health care is changing in Oregon, as it is in the rest of the United States. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) has made health care available to thousands of Oregonians previously without healthcare coverage. In fact, because of the ACA, more than 95 percent of Oregonians now have health insurance.

In response to the ACA, Oregon created Coordinating Care Organizations (CCO). A CCO coordinates benefits and services, and manages costs in local communities for those covered by Medicaid. They are charged with designing new models of care to accomplish the Triple Aim.<sup>1</sup> While most CCO governance boards do not have nurse representation, the policies created and enforced by these community boards have a direct impact on Oregonians who receive care from Medicaid providers. Because nurses have the education and science background, a unique perspective across the continuum of care and a deep operational understanding of the care experience, it is essential to increase the number of nurses serving in leadership positions on healthcare boards.

As the largest portion of the healthcare workforce in Oregon, nurses are at the forefront in providing care to this previously underserved Medicaid population. Oregon nurses outnumber physicians (4:1), medical assistants (5:1), physical therapists (14:1) and dentists (16:1).<sup>2</sup> Nurses are key leaders in fostering the culture of health necessary to achieving the Triple Aim. They are often the first line of response when someone needs care; they "...provide the majority of patient assessments, evaluations, and care in hospitals, nursing homes, clinics, schools, workplaces, and ambulatory settings" (IOM, 2011). Nurses have the knowledge and skills to design, prioritize and implement policies. The absence of nursing's voice at the policy table can result in changes and initiatives that could unintentionally harm the most vulnerable populations.

An informal scan in 2013 revealed only four of the 220 board members across the 16 CCO boards in Oregon are nurses. Nurse membership is currently at six, but still remains significantly below the number of physician members. Interestingly, only two of the nurse members are identified as nurses on the state's CCO governing board list.<sup>3</sup> While exact numbers are difficult to come by, nurses are on the boards of some of the

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<sup>1</sup> The term "Triple Aim" refers to the simultaneous pursuit of improving the patient experience of care, improving the health of populations, and reducing the per capita cost of health care. See also <http://www.ihl.org/engage/initiatives/TripleAim/Pages/default.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> [http://oregoncenterfornursing.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/OR\\_Nurse\\_Big\\_Picture\\_1200.jpg](http://oregoncenterfornursing.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/OR_Nurse_Big_Picture_1200.jpg)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.oregon.gov/oha/OHPB/Pages/health-reform/certification/CCO-Governing-Boards.aspx>

larger hospitals in Oregon, but absent from website rosters of boards of smaller and rural hospitals.

## **OREGON ACTION COALITION**

The OAC Steering Committee is made up of 20 community partners from nursing and non-nursing organizations. The co-leads are the Oregon Center for Nursing (OCN) and the Oregon Public Health Association. The committee is comprised of ethnically diverse male and female members representing a mix of graduate and undergraduate students, rural and public health nurses, nurses in both education and in practice, and non-nursing stakeholders. Formed in 2012, this group has always fostered a culture of fairness and inclusiveness as part of the decision-making process.

Carrying out the Oregon Nurses on Strategic Healthcare Boards initiative will require the commitment of many leaders in Oregon's nursing community. Many of these leaders already actively participate in the OAC Steering Committee. Key stakeholders and partners on the Oregon Nurses on Strategic Healthcare Boards proposal include:

- **The Oregon Center for Nursing:** The Oregon Center for Nursing is the state nursing workforce center with a mission to ensure Oregon has a superior, well-prepared, and diverse nursing workforce to serve the health and wellness needs of our communities. The OCN will serve as the fiscal sponsor and applicant for this proposal.
- **The Oregon Patient Safety Commission:** The Oregon Patient safety Commission is a semi-independent state agency charged by the Oregon Legislature with reducing the risk of serious adverse events occurring in Oregon's healthcare system and encouraging a culture of patient safety.
- **The Oregon Public Health Association:** The Oregon Public Health Association (OPHA) is an affiliate of the American Public Health Association. The OPHA focuses on ensuring that all Oregonians have quality public health services and creating policies that protect, promote and preserve the public's health. The OPHA has a large public health nursing section.
- **AARP:** a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that helps people 50 and older improve the quality of their lives.
- **Oregon Health & Science University:** Oregon Health & Science University is the state's only academic health center. From humble beginnings in 1887, OHSU has grown into a world-class teaching hospital and research center that draws in students, scientists and patients from across the country and around the globe.
- **National Association of Hispanic Nurses, Oregon Chapter:** NAHN Oregon is a professional organization committed to advancing the education and professional development of nurses, advocating for Latino communities and

campaigning for health and social justice in underserved communities across Oregon.

- **Oregon Nurses Association:** The Oregon Nurses Association is a professional association and labor union representing registered nurses. ONA's mission is to advocate for nursing and quality health care.

## **PROPOSAL NARRATIVE**

Because, nurses' voices remain conspicuously absent from strategic boards where healthcare redesign decisions are being made, the Oregon Nurses on Strategic Healthcare Boards project goal is to increase the number of nurses serving as public, private, and governmental healthcare decision makers on strategic, key healthcare boards. To accomplish this goal, this project will target CCO and other strategic healthcare boards to appoint appropriate nurse leaders, develop nurses to take on leadership roles on these boards, and successfully make the case to these boards to recruit nurse members.

**Objective #1:** Identify strategic key decision-making and influential healthcare boards for transforming healthcare.

1. Generate a list of healthcare boards in Oregon and current nurse membership, including:
2. Analyze Oregon healthcare boards and determine the most influential healthcare decision making boards in Oregon - areas of greatest need for new models of care (e.g. rural regions) or boards with great influence on emerging models of care (CCOs)
3. Coordinate information gathered with Nurses On Boards Coalition
4. Create a contact list for targeted boards (CCOs, FQHC, etc.)

**Objective #2:** Increase the number of nurses prepared for leadership roles in healthcare policy, design, and decision-making on healthcare boards.

1. Develop roster of nurses available for/interested in board service
2. Create a set of resource materials (toolkit), including currently existing resources, for nurses to further their move to board and policy positions
3. Create new or identify established board training and/or mentorship programs to implement locally
4. Promote and conduct board training programs to identified Oregon nurses

5. Convene a group of nurse and other healthcare trustees to identify strategies for board appointments

**Objective #3: Increase awareness among nurses, other health professionals, and key healthcare decision-makers of the value of nurse board service**

1. Develop relationships with leaders of identified strategic boards, decision-making organizations, and influential positions to engage them in the IOM recommendations and the value nursing's contribution to their decision-making process.
2. Utilize the national Nurses on Boards Coalition through the Campaign for Action and the Oregon Action Coalition Communications Workgroup to develop or modify materials to share with board leaders.
  - o Create talking points document on nursing's value to healthcare boards
3. Raise awareness of the importance of nurses on boards through social media, blogs, and OCN's Oregon NurseCast podcast
4. Seek out and engage other health professionals in Oregon Nurses on Strategic Healthcare Boards project to support a multidisciplinary approach to healthcare.
5. Share information through presentations across the state about the need to diversify hospital/health system/health policy boards.
6. Hold a summit on nursing leadership on healthcare boards to achieve the Triple Aim and move a culture of health.
7. Hire staff at the Oregon Center for Nursing to build the infrastructure needed to support the OAC and accomplish the objectives of the Oregon Nurses on Strategic Healthcare Boards project.