

Supporting a People-Centered Workforce

Nurses / Advance Practice Registered Nurses



Trinity Health is one of the largest multi-institutional Catholic health care delivery systems in the nation, serving diverse communities that include more than 30 million people across 22 states. We are building a People-Centered Health System to put the people we serve at the center of every behavior, action and decision. This brings to life our commitment to be a compassionate, transforming and healing presence in our communities. We advocate for public policies that support better health, better care and lower costs to ensure affordable, high quality, people-centered care for all.

Building a People-Centered Health System requires empowering and fully deploying a health care workforce across the entire continuum of care. Trinity Health fully supports interprofessional team planning and care. Offering collaborative work environments, our nursing teams support each other, clinical staff and physicians to ensure better health, better care and lower costs. This includes the expertise of nurses at all levels of training as well as registered nurses (RNs) and advance practice registered nurses (APRNs) as providers, members of the interprofessional care team, researchers, innovators and leaders. The importance of nursing continues to grow as providers and payers drive health system transformation and the need for primary care increases. It is critical to note what state and federal policymakers can and should do to help advance and support this essential workforce.

Why Are Nurses and Advanced Practice Nurses Important?

More than 40 years of evidence-based research demonstrates that nurses, RNs and APRNs—an essential part of an interprofessional team—provide safe, quality, cost-effective care with positive patient outcomes and high satisfaction. As the percentage of the population—65 years of age and older—continues to grow, the need for RNs and APRNs to practice at the top of their licensure will be necessary to ensure important access to care, especially primary care. Nurses should be empowered to provide care the way it should be: in a variety of settings, with a commitment to autonomy, and at top of license. Putting people at the center of what we do, nurses, RNs and APRNs are advancing a redesigned approach to care management for patients with chronic conditions.

Trinity Health's Commitment to Advancement

Committed to the development of nurses at all levels of practice, Trinity Health has formulated a number of programs and resource supports designed to enhance the practice of nursing within the interprofessional care team. These programs include:

- A dedication to advance all registered nurses to the level of a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) Degree.
- Nurse residency program, including collaboration between Trinity Health, the Vizient Consortium and the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), offering new graduate nurses exposure to the most current evidence in practice as well as helping nurses transition to practice with the background necessary to help them grow in their profession.
- Moving nurses to advance practice level, allowing all nurses to practice at the top of their licensure.

Nurse Practitioners (NPs) Providing Primary Care in Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE)

NPs are designated primary care providers (PCPs) in the Interdisciplinary Care Team (IDT) for the frail and elderly participants at several Trinity Health PACE sites. Working collaboratively with medical directors and other physician practitioners, NPs—performing at the top of their licensure—deliver successful outcomes in this role.

What Can Policymakers Do?

Support policies that promote workplace safety and appropriate staffing across the continuum of providers.

Recommendations:

- Advance policies that strengthen workplace safety for all nurses.
- Oppose nurse-to-patient staffing ratios. Evidence has demonstrated that ratios do not produce a positive impact on quality of care. They often result in higher costs, and override clinical and professional judgment of patient needs.

Supporting a People-Centered Workforce

Advance policies that will support, empower and reimburse RNs and APRNs as decision-makers to improve care management and access to care.

Recommendations:

- Expand authority for decision-making including authorization of performing screenings, ordering testing and diagnostics, prescribing medications and admitting privileges in the areas of primary care, home health care, skilled nursing facilities and hospice care to advance the care of patients.
- Support opportunities and provide hospitals a process to allow nurses, RNs and APRNs membership on hospital medical staffs and to grant hospital clinical privileges.
- Develop and support initiatives that improve the input into and use of health information technology as a way of enhancing care coordination and decision-making by all nurses.
- Support refinements to Medicare and Medicaid that address inconsistencies in how services provided by APRNs, within their existing scope of practice, are treated for certification or reimbursement.

Invest in education and support policies that allow nurses, RNS and APRNs to practice at the top of their licensure, to improve access to care, promote professional development and retain experienced clinicians.

Recommendations:

- Support initiatives to train and attract more nurses, RNs and APRNs.
- Support continuing education for nurses; for instance, by increasing the number of nurse faculty to improve access and advance the provision of patient care.
- Support policies that increase retention and promote educational and professional advancement as well as promoting positive practice environments, such as through the attainment of American Nursing Credentialing Center (ANCC) Magnet status and ANCC Pathways to Excellence designation.
- Modernize state licensure laws so that the laws do not artificially limit the abilities of patients to obtain care; support efforts to facilitate care delivery across states, such as through Licensure Compacts; and incentivize the replication and adoption of national standards.
- Develop and test patient-centered care methods that allow nurses, RNs and APRNs to practice at their highest level of education, training and licensure.

Driving Nursing Excellent Across Trinity Health

Health care organizations that embark on a journey toward Magnet status or Pathways to Excellence designation are remarkable in that they value staff nurses, involve nurses in shaping research-based nursing practice, encourage and reward professionals for advancing in their practice of nursing, or are committed to offering positive practice environments. Across Trinity Health, tools and resources are in place to encourage hospitals to embrace the essence of achieving these designations. St. Mary Mercy – Livonia, in Michigan, has received its Pathways to Excellence designation. Following are Trinity Health Magnet status hospitals:

- Mercy Health Saint Mary's (Grand Rapids, Mich.)
- Mercy Medical Center (Dubuque, Iowa)
- Mercy Medical Center (Clinton, Iowa)
- St. Peter's Hospital (Albany, N.Y.)
- Loyola University Medical Center (Maywood, Ill.)
- St. Joseph's Health (Syracuse, N.Y.)
- Saint Joseph's Hospital (Atlanta, Ga.)
- Winter Haven Hospital (Winter Haven, Fla.)

Mission

We, Trinity Health, serve together in the spirit of the Gospel as a compassionate and transforming healing presence within our communities.

Core Values

Reverence • Commitment to Those Who Are Poor
Justice • Stewardship • Integrity