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APRIL 1, 2017

Publication of the Arkansas State Board of Nursing
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The mission of the Arkansas State Board of Nursing is to protect the public and act as their advocate by effectively regulating the practice of nursing.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  Sue A. Tedford, MNSc, APRN
EDITOR  LouAnn Walker

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The ASBN Update circulation includes over 52,000 licensed nurses and student nurses in Arkansas.
By the time you read this, the 91st Arkansas General Assembly will be over. It was a busy session with many bills filed that affect the practice of nursing in Arkansas. Some were beneficial and others could have been detrimental to nursing. During every legislative session I jump on my soapbox—nurses need to get involved in issues related to nursing practice. Nurses are busy with day-to-day responsibilities of their job, along with family obligations. It is hard to find time to do anything extra; I know because I have been there.

In previous years, only a handful of nurses were involved in the legislative process. Nursing bills would come before the Public Health, Welfare and Labor Committee with only a few nurses taking the time to contact their legislators to express their support or opposition. On occasion, a few nurses would show up for a committee meeting.

Things were different this year. The social media blitz took off! E-mail, Facebook and Twitter exploded with information on the bills and how to let your opinions be known. Several nursing organizations’ websites displayed information about the bills. Many “call to action” alerts were spread across the nursing community. Nurses attended almost all of the committee meetings. Many days there was not space to walk around in the committee room, and security had to be called to control the number of people. They would not let you in the committee room until someone came out. It was an awesome sight!

I wish I could give you the outcome of the nursing related bills, but as I write this the session is still in full action, and most bills are still going through the legislative process. There are two nursing bills which have passed. The first is HB1180, Signature Authority. This allows advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) to sign documents, such as death certificates, certification of disability and physical exams. The other bill is HB1413. This bill allows the Board of Nursing to create an alternative to discipline program for nurses with substance abuse issues.

Nursing is the largest group of health care providers in Arkansas, as well as the nation. There is always power in numbers, and we, as nurses, can influence health policy by making our voices heard. The citizens of Arkansas elect the representatives and senators making the decisions. They work for you, their constituents, so let them know how you feel about their support or lack of support on nursing issues.

Again, let me say thanks to the nurses involved in this year’s session. You were fantastic, but I would love to see these numbers double in 2019. Together we can make a difference. Nurses rock!
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Your Real Estate Needs
This is my first column of the new year, so Happy New Year and welcome to 2017! I hope the first few months have been good to you. With the new year comes many changes. We often make New Year’s resolutions, such as eating healthier, exercising, losing weight, stopping smoking, sleeping more (or less), getting a new job, being a better mom, dad, wife, husband, etc. While these are all important resolutions that I encourage you to keep if applicable, I would also like to encourage you to resolve to be an even better nurse in 2017. I am going to start you off with a list of some possible ideas!

1. Take care of yourself! Your health should be first and foremost, or you can’t take adequate care of others. Some ways to do this is to destress (because we all know that nursing is stress-free, right?) through exercise such as yoga, walking, or what you enjoy the most. Take your scheduled breaks at work, eat your meals and bring nutritious snacks! Stay hydrated and take bathroom breaks! Enjoy your off-time by spending it with family and friends, reading a book, a day at a spa, sitting in a hot tub, or getting a massage! You deserve it.

2. Stay up on the latest standards of care through continuing education, workshops and conferences, furthering your education by taking additional classes or obtaining advanced degrees, teaching a class, or mentoring others. Remaining current will minimize your stress at work, increase your skills and abilities, and make you a safer (better) nurse. Mentoring others will ensure that you are ‘on your toes’ and able to answer questions accurately! It will also make you feel good to share what you know and help train other nurses.

3. Be an example at your place of employment. Be the kind of nurse you want to work with. How? Offer to help out when you are able; ask for help when needed so the job is done right the first time and encourage teamwork on your floor; always document accurately; acknowledge mistakes and handle them quickly and appropriately; double-check all medications before they are administered; be respectful of and courteous to the physicians and interdisciplinary team members; don’t talk about co-workers unless they are present to hear what you say about them.

4. Join committees at work or professional committees outside the workplace, or join nursing organizations that work for our profession. Become involved in making a change and in improving our working conditions, scope of practice, and patient safety. A great new organization to consider becoming involved in is the Arkansas Center for Nursing, whose mission is to “promote a culture of health for the citizens of Arkansas by advancing nursing education, practice, leadership and workforce development.”

5. Take time to appreciate others this year. Make sure you give thanks to those who do something to help you out and make your life easier. Write an actual thank you note—it’s a lost art that is greatly appreciated! Treat your co-worker to an occasional treat, maybe your famous brownies, homemade cheesecake, or freshly-made guacamole!

6. Learn to say “no.” This is a skill that has to be acquired. Nurses are notorious for always saying “yes” and getting overwhelmed with commitments. It is okay to say no and set limits when needed. It is not good for you, your family, employer, coworkers, nor your patients, if you are stretched too thin!

7. Find joy! Enjoy every day to the best of your ability, and always try to end the day on a positive note. Don’t go to sleep without reflecting on the good things you experienced during the day, however small they may be.

8. Laugh—after all, we know laughter is the best medicine! Lighten up when you can and try to not take things too seriously, finding some humor in your day. Laugh at yourself!

9. These are just a few ideas you can resolve to do in 2017, making you an even better nurse and an overall happier person!

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2016–2017 BOARD DATES

2017

April 12 .................. Hearings
April 13 .................. Hearings
May 10 .................. Board Strategic Planning
May 11 .................. Business Meeting
June 14 .................. Hearings
June 15 .................. Hearings
July 12 .................. Hearings
July 13 .................. Hearings
August . . NCSBN Annual Meeting,
Chicago, IL
September 13 ........... Hearings
September 14 ........ Business Meeting
October 11 .......... Hearings
October 12 .......... Hearings
November 15 .......... Hearings
November 16 .......... Hearings

Save the Date! • Nursing Expo • Sat., April 1, 2017 • See p. 5 for more info!

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Nancy Boykin, RN
Ashley Breaux, BSN, RN, CPN
Cristin Goodner, RNC

Amy Huett, PhD, RN-BC
Carolyn Martin, BSN, RN, CPN
Brook Scalzo, BSN, RN, CPN

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Special Notice about the Arkansas State Board of Nursing Magazine

The Arkansas State Board of Nursing has designated this magazine as an official method to notify nurses residing in the state and licensed by the Board about information and legal developments. Please read this magazine and keep it for future reference as this magazine may be used in hearings as proof of notification of the ASBN Update’s contents. Please contact LouAnn Walker at the Board office (501.686.2715) if you have questions about any of the articles in this magazine.

President Ramonda Housh presided over hearings on January 18 and February 15 and the business meeting held on January 19. Highlights of Board actions are as follows:

- Granted Continued Full Approval to:
  - North Arkansas College Associate of Applied Science in Nursing program until the year 2021
  - University of Central Arkansas Baccalaureate of Science in Nursing program until the year 2021
- Approved curriculum revisions effective immediately for National Park College practical nurse program and
- Accepted the 2016 NCLEX® low pass rate responses for the following:
  - Southeast Arkansas College ADN—two years
  - Southern Arkansas University ADN—two years
  - University of Arkansas Community College Batesville PN—two years
  - University of Arkansas Community College Batesville ADN PN—one year
  - University of Arkansas Monticello ADN—one year

The National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) voted on Dec. 1, 2016, to uphold the current passing standard for the NCLEX-PN Examination (the National Council Licensure Examination for Practical Nurses). The passing standard will remain at the current level of -0.21 logits* that was instituted April 1, 2014. This passing standard will remain in effect through March 31, 2020.

In their evaluation the NCSBN Board of Directors (BOD) used multiple sources of information to guide its evaluation and discussion regarding the change in the passing standard. These sources include the results from the criterion-referenced standard-setting workshop, a historical record of the NCLEX-PN passing standard and candidate performance, the educational readiness of high school graduates who expressed an interest in nursing, and the results from annual surveys of nursing educators and employers conducted between 2014 and 2016. As part of this process, NCSBN convened an expert panel of nine subject matter experts to perform a criterion-referenced standard-setting procedure. The panel’s findings supported the creation of a higher passing standard. NCSBN also considered the results of national surveys of nursing professionals, including nursing educators, directors of nursing in acute care settings and administrators of long-term care facilities.

In accordance with a motion adopted by the 1989 NCSBN Delegate Assembly, the NCSBN BOD evaluates the passing standard for the NCLEX-PN Examination every three years to protect the public by ensuring minimal competence for entry-level PNs. NCSBN coordinates the passing standard analysis with the three-year cycle of test plan evaluation. This three-year cycle was developed to keep the test plan and passing standard current. The 2017 NCLEX-PN Test Plan is available free of charge from the NCSBN website.

*NCSBN Board of Directors Upholds Current Passing Standard for the NCLEX-PN Exam

A logit is defined as a unit of measurement to report relative differences between candidate ability estimates and item difficulties.
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Nurses are physically busy people. So why do you need exercise?

Strange as it may sound, your everyday job tasks do not count as “physical activity.” Your body has become accustomed to everyday tasks. As a nurse, you have a demanding, high-stress job that is strenuous and mentally taxing. Many nurses develop back pain, slipped discs, and other degenerative conditions. The long hours and moving patients take their toll. Shift work has been found to increase many health problems and it is compounded by poor eating habits, interrupted sleep patterns and abnormal hormone levels.

Physical activity can help offset many of these negative factors. By exercising regularly, you strengthen your body’s muscles, joints and bones. Building strength helps combat back pain. A regular exercise routine will give you more energy and help balance out your hormones.

Regular exercise is important, but how do you fit it into your already demanding schedule? And, how can you motivate a tired mind? Exercise can be done just about anywhere and remember, some is always better than none. Here are some tips:

• **Make a commitment.** Too often we don’t commit to ourselves or we let everything else get in the way. Make a schedule, write it down and stick to it as if it were a life and death task. Yes, it’s that important!

• **Getting some exercise is always better than none.** If you only have 10 minutes, use those 10 minutes. With a consistent program, done most days of the week, even short workouts can do wonders for both mind and body.

• **Do what YOU enjoy.** Not everyone enjoys the gym setting, working out at home with a DVD or running outdoors in any weather. Pick what you like and you are much more likely to stick with it. Don’t be afraid to try new things. If a new activity doesn’t fit your taste or schedule, that just means you need to keep looking.

• **Pick at least one “quickie” workout that can be done anywhere, with no gym equipment.** Things like body-weight, high-intensity interval training; jogging in place or doing squats during commercial breaks of your favorite show are all good options.

There are many “at home” or “in office” workouts all over the internet, on any search engine.

• **Track activity levels.** Make appointments in your calendar to work out. Then make a note on your calendar every time you work out. Add up your time at the end of each week to be sure you’re staying on track with your goal. This helps prevent slacking.

• **Work exercise into your work day.** Getting paid to exercise? Yes! Here are some examples:
  - **Squats:** If you’re in a patient’s room making the bed or getting some supplies out of a storage room, do a few squats. Instead of bending over to grab something, squat down and pick it up. Be sure to keep your back straight and weight over your heels. You want to feel this in your thighs and glutes.
  - **Desk push-ups:** Stand facing a desk or counter. Place your hands on the edge and move your feet back so there’s room to move. Keeping your back straight and core muscles tight, slowly lower your self toward the desk until you are almost touching it and then push yourself back up.
  - **Water bottle dumbbells:** Put a full bottle in each hand and use them as upper body weights. You can do things like bicep curls or shoulder presses.
  - **Stairmaster:** Stairs are the easiest way to incorporate exercise. It’s great aerobic and leg conditioner. Intentionally walk up an extra floor or two so you have to come down; try taking the stairs two at a time.

Society views nurses as important role models. Many nurses are called upon to educate patients on the importance of diet and exercise, but are not walking the walk. The American Nurses Association (www.nursingworld.com) defines a healthy nurse as one who "actively focuses on creating and maintaining a balance and synergy of physical, intellectual, emotional, spiritual, personal and professional wellbeing." Commit yourself anew to meet that definition for yourself and your patients.

Ms. Naramore is AFMC’s Wellness Leader, is a certified personal trainer with degrees in exercise physiology and health promotion.
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The Arkansas State Board of Nursing frequently receives calls regarding the renewal process. The following are some of the common questions we receive. Additional frequently asked questions are located at www.arsbn.org. Click the Licensing tab.

Q. When do I have to renew my license?
A. To renew your license on time and maintain an active status, you must renew your license within the 60 day period preceding your expiration date. Your license expiration date should always be the last day of your birth month. If you were born in an even-numbered year, your license will expire in even-numbered years. If you were born in an odd-numbered year, your license will expire in odd-numbered years. The initial period of licensure in Arkansas, whether licensed by examination or endorsement, is for a period of three (3) to twenty-seven (27) months, depending on the nurse’s date of birth. Any time a license is issued mid-renewal cycle, the next time the renewal date falls, the license must be renewed.

Q. What do I do if I have not received my renewal notice?
A. It is not necessary to wait until you have received a renewal notice to renew, and it is each licensee’s responsibility to ensure their nursing license is renewed by the expiration date. The renewal cycle falls every two years at the end of the month of your birth—odd or even years as they coincide with your year of birth respectively; i.e., if you were born in an even numbered year, you would renew every two years on even numbered years. As a courtesy, we mail a postcard renewal reminder to the last known address on record.

Q. How do I renew my license?
A. You may renew your license online up to sixty (60) days prior to your license expiration date. Go to www.arsbn.org and click on License Renewal to complete the online renewal process.

Q. What is the renewal fee?
A. The renewal fee is $91.68. Payment can be made by check, money order, or credit card. For credit card payments, the fee is $92.00. The fee is due at the time of renewal.

Q. What information will I need to renew my license?
A. You will log on with your license number, social security number and date of birth. To complete the process, you will need your continuing education information (copies of certificates, academic transcript, or certification information) and your payment method information.

Q. What happens if I do not renew my nursing license by the expiration date?
A. If you do not renew your license by midnight on the expiration date, your license is considered expired and any nursing practice after that time will be considered unlicensed practice and will be subject to disciplinary action and civil penalty. A late fee and additional continuing education hours will be required for future renewal. There is no grace period for renewal.

Q. What if I am unable to complete the required contact hours needed for renewal? Can I get an extension?
A. No, the Board does not issue extensions, and the continuing education requirement must be met before renewal. Failure to meet the CE requirement may result in disciplinary action and civil penalties.

Q. When can my employer verify my renewal?
A. Once you have renewed your license online, the license is put into a queue with a “pending” status, and the renewal is then submitted for approval. Upon verification that all renewal requirements have been met, the renewal is approved and finalized. This process takes at least 2-3 business days and can take longer if there are further requirements which must be met. Until the finalized approval, the renewal is pending, and the expiration date does not change. After at least 3 business days have passed, check the registry search to verify that your expiration date has been extended.
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CONTINUING EDUCATION

In an effort to help curtail the national epidemic of opioid abuse, new prescribing guidelines have been enacted for all advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) in Arkansas.

APRNs with prescriptive authority shall complete five contact hours of pharmacotherapeutics continuing education in the APRN’s area of certification each biennium prior to license renewal. Effective January 1, 2017, two of the prescribing hours must contain information related to maintaining professional boundaries and the prescribing rules, regulations and laws that apply to APRNs in Arkansas (ASBN Rules, Chapter 4, Section III,F.7.). In order to meet this requirement, each APRN will need to complete the course Advanced Practice Nursing in Arkansas (two contact hours). This is to be completed prior to renewal of your license.

Act 1208 of A.C.A. §20-7-704 specifically states that all APRNs issued a certificate of prescriptive authority after December 31, 2015, shall obtain a minimum of three hours of prescribing education which includes information on maintaining professional boundaries and the prescribing rules, regulations and laws that apply to APRNs in the state within two years of issuance of the prescriptive authority certificate (ASBN Rules, Chapter 4, Section VIII, A.7.). In order to meet this requirement, each APRN issued a certificate of prescriptive authority after December 31, 2015, will need to complete two courses, Advanced Practice Nursing in Arkansas (two contact hours) and Prescription Drug Misuse and Abuse (one contact hour).

In order to help APRNs meet these requirements, continuing education courses have been developed by the Arkansas State Board of Nursing.

The course, Advanced Practice Nursing in Arkansas, is located at www.arsbn.org under the Advanced Practice tab. Prescription Drug Misuse and Abuse will be available shortly.

After review of each module a post-test is to be completed with a mandatory score of 75 percent or better. Once completed, a certificate will be emailed to you. Please note that this requirement has not been satisfied until you are in possession of the certificate of completion.

E-mail the posttest to dgarrett@arsbn.org or fax to 501-686-2714 attention: Debbie Garrett, DNP, APRN.

APRN AUDITS

Quarterly random audits are sent to APRNs holding an active license in Arkansas. The audit requires the APRN to submit a copy of their current national certification and a certificate of proof of five contact hours of pharmacotherapeutic continuing education for those with prescriptive authority. These pharmacotherapeutic CE hours must be in the area of the APRN’s certification and meet the guidelines previously discussed. All APRNs must meet the continuing education requirements of their certifying body in order to maintain current certification.

RN LICENSE

An active RN license is required in order to hold an APRN license. Each license (RN and APRN) must be renewed each biennium. The RN license must be:

• An active, unencumbered Arkansas RN license, or
• An active, unencumbered RN, multistate license in a compact state provided the compact state is the APRN’s primary state of residence.

If the APRN lives in a state that is not a member of the Nurse Licensure Compact, an Arkansas RN license must be requested and issued prior to the issuance of the APRN license.
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The National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) Board of Directors (BOD) voted to provide NCSBN courses “Understanding Substance Use Disorder in Nursing” and “Nurse Manager Guidelines for Substance Use Disorder” free of charge for all nurses and nursing students.

NCSBN BOD President Katherine Thomas, MN, RN, FAAN, executive director, Texas Board of Nursing, comments, “The chronic and complex disease of substance use disorder (SUD) is an issue of importance to U.S. boards of nursing because of the potential harm to patient welfare. Cognizant of the opioid crisis and substance use disorder’s societal impact, NCSBN is responding to the American Public Health Association’s call to action to implement evidence-based provider training programs in substance use disorder.”

NCSBN’s SUD toolkit, brochures, posters, a book and two continuing education (CE) courses, was developed to assure that nurses are armed with knowledge to help identify the warning signs of SUD in patients, nurses and the general public and provide guidelines for prevention, education and intervention.

Now all of these resources are available free of charge from www.ncsbn.org. Both CE courses award contact hours upon successful completion. Register for the courses at www.learningext.com. In addition the toolkit includes the “Substance Use Disorder in Nursing” resource manual, the “Substance Use Disorder in Nursing” video, prevention-focused posters for health care facilitates and two brochures, “What You Need to Know About Substance Use Disorder in Nursing” and “A Nurse Manager’s Guide to Substance Use Disorder in Nursing.”
This is the million dollar question hospital executives are asking and they need answers because nurse turnover is costly and negatively impacts the quality of patient care. There is certainly research that has helped identify what influences nurse satisfaction, engagement and loyalty to an organization. The message surrounding the nursing shortage is not new. The Joint Commission even got involved in 2003 with a white paper, *Health Care at the Crossroads: Strategies for Resolving the Evolving Nursing Crisis*, that attempted to raise awareness and provide recommendations for nurse retention in health care organizations. Other studies have gone further to examine various generational perspectives that affect nurse turnover giving leaders even more insight into what nurses want.

While each generation may have different expectations for their nursing careers, there are many similarities in what influences their intent to stay with an employer. At UAMS we value all nurses and are committed to ensuring the satisfaction and engagement of our entire nursing team.

According to Tournangeu, Thomson, Cummings and Cranley (2013), nurses from each generation reported that reasonable workload and manageable nurse-to-patient ratios were significant incentives to stay in their current employment. The work of nursing is often complex, mentally and physically strenuous and emotionally taxing. At UAMS, nurse-to-patient ratios are lower than most adult acute care facilities in Arkansas averaging 1:5 for medical-surgical units and no more than 1:2 for critical care. Manageable workloads for nurses are necessary for delivery of safe, quality patient care which is a top priority at UAMS.
Another commonality among generations of nurses includes the desire for a supportive and empathetic manager. UAMS unit/area leaders are educated and experienced nurses who have a passion for patient care and the nursing profession. They are committed to their teams and are wonderful advocates for patients and nurses. UAMS recognizes that development and support for nursing leaders is critical and we strive to provide the tools they need to be successful.

An altruistic nature is a characteristic that binds nurses together regardless of their clinical background, practice setting or age. Their concern for the welfare of others positions them to be wonderful patient advocates but they can only do this effectively if the institution in which they practice actually listens to them. Perceptions of professional status and involvement in decision-making are measured in most nurse engagement surveys and both certainly influence a nurse’s intent to stay in their current employment. UAMS recognizes that nurses are the backbone of the organization and values the voice of nursing. Our shared-decision making structure includes clinical nurse representation from all units/clinics/areas and we are committed to making sure the collective voice of nursing informs decisions, especially those that affect practice.

As the only academic adult health care facility in Arkansas, UAMS is always evaluating the effectiveness of current programs and we are continually searching for new and innovative ways to support, develop and recognize nurses. Our work to become the health care employer of choice for nurses and the journey to create a culture of excellence is ongoing because we know that if we don’t give nurses a good reason to stay, we’re giving them a good reason to go.

The full statutory citations for disciplinary actions can be found at www.arsbn.org under Nurse Practice Act, Sub Chapter 3, §17-87-309. Frequent violations are A.C.A. §17-87-309 (a)(1) “Is guilty of fraud or deceit in procuring or attempting to procure a license to practice nursing or engaged in the practice of nursing without a valid license;” (a)(2) “Is guilty of a crime or gross immorality;” (a)(4) “Is habitually intemperate or is addicted to the use of habit-forming drugs;” (a)(6) “Is guilty of unprofessional conduct;” and (a)(9) “Has willfully or repeatedly violated any of the provisions of this chapter.” Other orders by the Board include civil penalties (CP), specific education courses (ED), and research papers (RP). Probation periods vary and may include an employee monitored nurse contract and/or drug monitoring and treatment programs.

Each individual nurse is responsible for reporting any actual or suspected violations of the Nurse Practice Act. To submit a report use the online complaint form at www.arsbn.org, or to receive additional information, contact the Nursing Practice Section at 501.686.2700 or Arkansas State Board of Nursing, 1123 South University, Suite 800, Little Rock, Arkansas 72204.
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**Disciplinary Actions**

**NOVEMBER 2016**

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