



## **NYSNA Legislative and Policy Platform – 2022-2023**

Approved by the NYSNA Board of Directors on September 8, 2022

### **Guiding Principles**

- 1. Protecting Patients and Maintaining the Quality of Health Care in New York and Nationally**
  - A. Fully implement the New York State hospital and nursing home staffing laws to ensure safe staffing and to serve as a basis for the continuing campaign to establish uniform and enforceable minimum nurse staffing standards that will apply to all practice settings in New York and nationally.**
  - B. Maintain professional and patient care standards and patient safety regulations, including the provision of requisite technology and equipment to be used in a patient-centered manner and guaranteeing quality care for all**
  - C. Fight against de-skilling, barriers to the scope of practice and erosion of standards of professional nursing practice**
  - D. End for-profit health care and stand against the treatment of patients and people in need of medical care as commodities or means for profit - patients must take precedence over profits**
  - E. Maintain proper and adequate financial support for rural, urban and community safety-net hospitals**
  - F. Target funding for indigent and low-income patient care to facilities that is proportionate to the actual amount of such care provided by each institution**
  - G. Maintain and expand the role of the public hospital and health care system**
  - H. Ensure equity of care in our hospitals for all patients regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, immigration status, employment, and income**
  
- 2. Guaranteed High Quality Medical Care and Treatment is a Human Right - NYSNA Supports Universal Access to Health Care Regardless of Socio-Economic Standing or Ability to Pay**
  - A. Implement a “Medicare for All” health care system to provide universal access to health care for all**
  - B. Eliminate barriers and maintain equality of access to care on the basis of need, regardless of socio-economic status, race, ethnicity, gender identity, ability to pay or immigration status**
  - C. Address social determinants of health as a core element of providing health care to our patients and communities**
  - D. No for-profit corporate or investor control or operation of hospitals and other health care providers**
  - E. Moratorium on the closure of hospitals and other vital health care services**
  - F. Maintain strong regulation of the market activity and business practices of all health care providers**
  - G. No erosion or elimination of existing Certificate of Need (CON) regulations**

- H. **Expand Certificate of Need (CON) regulations applicable to licensed primary care facilities to cover unregulated physician practices and other facilities that currently operate with minimal oversight and control**
  - I. **Reject austerity proposals and cuts to services, and seek needed revenue from those most able to provide it**
- 3. Protect the Rights, Working Conditions and Economic Security of Nurses, Health Care Providers and all Working People**
- A. **Maintain and improve the ability of nurses and other health workers to properly exercise their professional duties to patients as defined by their scope of practice and clinical competency**
  - B. **Provide a safe working environment for nurses, health care workers, and patients**
  - C. **Provide fair terms and conditions of employment to all nurses, health care workers, and other workers**
  - D. **Provide all nurses, health care workers and other workers with high quality health care benefits**
  - E. **Provide all nurses, health care workers and other workers with economic security in retirement or in the event of disability or inability to continue working**
  - F. **Recognize and expand the right of all nurses, health care workers and other workers to organize and engage in collective activity, to effectively engage in collective bargaining, and reject all efforts to restrict or constrain the exercise of workers' rights, including so-called "right to work" laws, restrictions of the rights to free speech, to strike and to engage in other public action, and attacks on wages, health care benefits and pension rights**
  - G. **Hold employers accountable for forcing nurses to work outside their scope of practice, area of expertise and clinical competencies and causing unsafe situations for nurses and patients**
- 4. Ensuring Democratic Input and Control of the Allocation of Health Care Resources In Our Communities**
- A. **Support the establishment of democratic regional health planning councils or other bodies composed of elected or representative members to provide democratic input in and real power to determine the allocation of health resources in their communities**
  - B. **Expand the role of the public and of direct care providers in the Certificate of Need (CON) regulatory process at the State and local level**
  - C. **Increase the transparency of the CON and other regulatory processes to ensure that the public is informed and has the ability to effectively monitor and meaningfully participate in the process**
  - D. **Provide for a rational and democratic planning process to oversee CON decision making and prevent disruptive and destructive market practices that result in the misallocation of medical care resources on the basis of monetized demand rather than unmet health care needs**
  - E. **Support a census that truly counts the total population, including all citizen and non-citizen residents, fairly apportions healthcare and other social funding, and advocates against undemocratic gerrymandering**

- 5. Actively Address Social Determinants of Health and their Impact on Health Outcomes of Patients and Communities**
  - A. Engage in efforts to eliminate environmental and social factors that contribute to racial and class disparities in the health, safety and well-being of local communities and populations, including income inequality and access to equal educational opportunity**
  - B. Mitigate climate change and address its contribution to causing superstorms and natural disasters, jeopardizing the quality and availability of food supplies, and otherwise negatively affecting the health and well-being of our communities**
  - C. Reduce environmental pollution and contamination of our air, water, soil and food**
  - D. Ensure the availability of safe housing for patients in need and protect the affordability and quality of the housing stock in our community**
  - E. Ensure that all patients and members of our communities are food secure and have access to healthy foods and proper nutrition**
  - F. Address the incidence and causes of violence, including gun violence, in our communities, schools, homes and health care facilities**
  - G. Address the growing mental health crisis and improve the availability of services to identify impacted individuals and provide necessary support**
  - H. Guarantee the full and unrestricted right to reproductive health care services and ensure the bodily autonomy of all people in New York and nationally, including the right to freely terminate pregnancies and to access the full range of contraceptive services and options**
  - I. Address all forms of bigotry and discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, immigration status, employment and income, so that all people are treated equally and fairly, have full access to vital services, are protected from environmental and climate change effects on their health and well-being, receive equal justice and fair treatment from the police, court and penal systems, and are socially, politically and economically integrated into our communities**
- 6. Participate in Initiatives and Support Legislation that Promotes Campaign Finance Reform to Level the Playing Field for Labor and Community-Based Candidates, Prohibits Voter Suppression and Ensures Universal Voting Access**
- 7. Preparing for and Responding to COVID and other Pandemics and Public Health Crises**
  - A. Nurses and their representatives must be fully incorporated into planning, decision making and emergency response to COVID and other ~~similar~~ public health emergencies**
  - B. Any planning and response to pandemics and public health emergencies must include effective rapid testing, infection control protocols and PPE supplies (including a focus on reusable equipment)**
  - C. Investment in and upgrading of ventilation and physical infrastructure in all workplaces and patient care settings must be prioritized to prevent or mitigate exposure of nurses and patients to airborne communicable diseases and other environmental hazards**
  - D. Expand the number of hospitals and beds with appropriate staffing to provide surge capacity and prohibit hospital closures and reductions of vital services and to prepare for public health emergencies**
  - E. Protect health care workers who are sickened or die from exposure to communicable diseases, including enhanced disability, workers compensation, and survivor benefits**

- F. Prohibit employers from using crises to reduce services or violate clinical practice and patient safety standards**
- G. Enact provisions to require crisis bonus pay and supplemental support services in the event of declared pandemics or other public health emergencies to support the essential work of the healthcare workforce**