

**Council on Nursing Practice Resolution:  
Defend and Advance Our Practice**

Whereas nurses play a unique and essential role in patient care, and we care for the whole patient; and

Whereas it is our obligation to exercise our professional judgment, informed by our training and experience, to assess and care for each patient; and

Whereas healthcare administrators are re-organizing our work and under-cutting our decision-making; and

Whereas administrators are rolling out electronic medical records and other new technologies without our essential input and with little regard for our practice, and hospital administrators can use these systems to reduce our discretion and judgment; and

Whereas there is a staffing crisis in our healthcare facilities, with many nurses frequently forced to take on far too many patients at once, and administrators are floating nurses to units without training or orientation; and

Whereas the only way we can effectively defend our practice is to organize collectively at every level of our union – from our units to Albany; and

Whereas many NYSNA nurses have taken the lead to promote evidence-based, patient-centered practice; and

Whereas the new NYSNA has mobilized to defend our practice and stopped the erosion of the amendment of the Nurse Practice Act; and

Therefore we resolve to recommend to the NYSNA Board of Directors that we adopt a program to organize on all fronts to save our practice:

- **Organize.** NYSNA delegates, stewards, and representatives will defend our practice by organizing campaigns on our units and in our facilities against the erosion of our practice.
- **Tools and training.** NYSNA will develop tools and trainings for nurses to use Protests of Assignment and other critical points of leverage to protect our practice, and will highlight the successful use of POAs in collective campaigns.
- **A say for nurses.** NYSNA will work to ensure nurses have a say in hospital decisions that affect our practice.
- **Uniting with patients.** NYSNA will alert the public about how unsafe staffing levels hurt patient care, and will work with patients and community members to win safe staffing in our contracts and in state law.
- **A clearinghouse for collective action.** NYSNA's Council on Nursing Practice, Practice Focus Groups, and Nursing Education and Practice Department will serve as a clearinghouse for information and strategies to organize collectively to defend our practice. NYSNA will bring together practice, regulatory, political, communications, educational, and legal resources to assist local and statewide campaigns to defend our practice.

## **Stop Privatization at Westchester Medical Center**

Whereas NYSNA is the largest union and professional association of registered nurses in New York, and our state's leading voice on patient care and nursing practice; and

Whereas the mission of our public hospitals is to care for the sick, and give them the highest quality of care, regardless of their ability to pay; and

Whereas executives at Westchester Medical Center laid off skilled caregivers, and is using for-profit staffing agencies to replace them; and

Whereas WMC executives are outsourcing and subcontracting vital patient care services; and

Whereas layoffs, outsourcing, and subcontracting has put patient care in danger; and

Whereas these changes put the public mission of WMC in danger;

Therefore, be it resolved that NYSNA will continue and expand our comprehensive campaign to defend patient care at Westchester Medical Center. We will:

- Mobilize members at WMC and beyond to educate the public and lawmakers about the dangerous attacks on care at WMC;
- Educate NYSNA members about what they can do to support our sisters and brothers at WMC, including refusing to work agency at WMC until this situation is resolved; and
- Use paid and earned media to educate the public in Westchester County about the dangerous attack on patient care; and
- Turn out the vote for Westchester candidates who oppose the dangerous attack on patient care.

## **NYSNA Bargaining Platform**

We resolve to endorse a platform for our bargaining that includes the following principles:

- A voice for nurses, patients, and the community.
- Protecting New York Patients.
- Equal Access to Care.
- Transparent, Member-Driven Negotiations.
- Protecting the Future of Nursing and Patient Care.

## **Workplace Violence Prevention**

Be it resolved that we will work with lawmaker to amend the workplace anti-violence legislation to include a comprehensive set of measures to prevent violence against nurses and all healthcare workers, including measures to promote training, staff cohesion, appropriate staffing, mental and physical health maintenance, employee assistance, and job security; and

We will work with lawmakers to convene hearings to educate other lawmakers and the public about what is needed to prevent violence against caregivers.

## **Our Mission Is to Care for All**

Whereas everyone deserves equal access to high-quality healthcare; and

Whereas delivering high-quality healthcare to all equally is the mission of our HHC system – where no one is ever turned away; and

Whereas our mission and the mission of our public hospital system is in danger from privatization and the restructuring of healthcare reimbursement rates; and

Whereas federal funds intended to support healthcare in underserved communities are being distributed in a manner that does not take into account the special role played by hospitals that care for all patients regardless of ability to pay; and

Whereas NYU Langone has received a lump sum of \$1.1 billion for damage from Hurricane Sandy, while only \$360 million has been granted to the entire HHC system; and

Whereas inequality in our country is out-of-control, and we see the toll it takes on our patients and the rise in poverty-related diseases and death; and

Whereas as patient advocates it is our duty to care for all members of the community, and to advocate for policies that improve the health and quality of life of everyone; and

Whereas NYSNA nurses have led the way for the accountability of our healthcare system to our patients and the community; and

Whereas our union's groundbreaking new contract at HHC and Mayoral agencies creates new childcare and elder care funds that set a model for what everyone deserves; and

Whereas we have the opportunity to advance our practice – expanding a model of evidence-based practice developed over decades by pathfinding HHC and Mayoral nurse leaders; and

Whereas our HHC system is the model for a single-payer healthcare system that we desperately need, and any successful single-payer system must be based on expanding our public hospital system;

Therefore we resolve to reaffirm our commitment to care for all:

- **Improve the quality of life for all.** We endorse the model of childcare and elder care funds in the new HHC contract as a model for what everyone deserves, and we support efforts to implement and expand this model. We will stay an active part of the fight against inequality and for an economy that provides jobs and essential services for all.
- **Take control of our practice.** We will coordinate our work to solidify, expand, and enforce a model of evidence-based, patient-centered practice, and we will work with other nurses to promote this model beyond the HHC system.
- **Roll back outsourcing.** We will step up our successful coordinated campaign – uniting patients, families, caregivers, community members, our fellow unions, and legislative leaders – to halt and roll back outsourcing at all healthcare facilities.
- **Healthcare for all.** We will plan and implement an unprecedented coordinated campaign to make equal access to care and healthcare for all a reality in New York – and the U.S.

## **The Future of Nursing and NYSNA**

Whereas student nurses are the future of nursing and the future of NYSNA; and

Whereas many student nurses are getting involved in our union and our campaigns for climate justice, healthcare for all, and safe staffing; and

Whereas programs like the Student Nurse Program throughout the HHC system are a model for training nurses in what it means to be a real patient advocate; and

Whereas too many student nurses graduate without a job, because too many hospitals are staffing our units below safe staffing levels;

Therefore we resolve to expand our work to unite student nurses:

- We will highlight programs like HHC's Student Nurse Programs as a model for how to instill our values in the next generation of nurses.
- We will expand our work to mobilize and unite student nurses as a political force for climate justice and healthcare for all.
- We will work with nursing education programs and nursing student organizations to turn out nursing students for our Safe Staffing lobby day – and continue this work throughout the next legislative session.

## Climate Justice

Whereas climate change is happening and our planet is warming dangerously; and

Whereas as our planet warms, storms like Hurricanes Sandy and Katrina will become stronger and more frequent; and

Whereas during Hurricane Katrina, for-profit hospital executives fled the scene and patients died; and

Whereas our HHC system and HHC nurses responded with resilience and heroism during Hurricane Sandy, evacuating hundreds of patients from Bellevue and Coney Island, without elevators or power, and not a single patient died; and

Whereas our patients will suffer higher rates illness and from increased natural disasters as the climate warms; and

Whereas a global movement to stop climate change is growing; and

Whereas NYSNA has joined this movement, launching a program to educate our members and our communities about the impact of climate change; and

Whereas NYSNA will join tens of thousands at the People's Climate March on Sunday, September 21 in New York City;

**Therefore we resolve to deepen our work for climate justice, to continue and expand our educational workshops about the impact of climate change on our patients, and to encourage other unions to join us in this fight.**

## **Training New Leaders**

Whereas we, the members, are the union; and

Whereas NYSNA has trained hundreds of members to serve as stewards and delegates; and

Whereas these new leaders are helping members protect our contract standards from erosion on their units and beyond; and

Whereas a strong steward network is the first line of defense; and

Whereas we need to train hundreds more members as stewards;

Therefore be it resolved that we recommend to the NYSNA Board of Directors to advance our Steward Training Program in 2014 and 2015:

- We endorse NYSNA's Steward Training Program as the model and method for building our strength.
- NYSNA stewards and leaders will hold dozens of shortened trainings for members to join Contract Action Teams in hospitals that are bargaining now, as a first step to recruiting new stewards.
- We will hold a one-day Steward's Conference in 2015 for new stewards to share strategies and continue our education.
- We will publish a regular Steward's Corner update in NYSNA publications, including the NY Nurse and our website.