

Looking Back at the Future of Nursing

In 2008, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and the Institute of Medicine (IOM, now the National Academy of Medicine) sought to transform the nursing profession. In 2010, the IOM published [*The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*](#) report to outline an action-oriented path for the nursing profession. To execute this report's recommendations nationwide, RWJF partnered with AARP Foundation to create the Future of Nursing: [*Campaign for Action*](#), and the creation of nursing "action coalitions" in each state and Washington, D.C. The Washington Center for Nursing (WCN) hosted an event during which various nursing stakeholders coalesced around the issues of 1) improving access to care, 2) fostering inter-professional collaboration, 3) promoting nursing leadership, 4) transforming nursing education, 5) increasing diversity in nursing, and 6) collecting workforce data. The leadership subgroup was strongest and is now the primary focus of the Washington Nursing Action Coalition (WNAC) in elevating nursing's role in ensuring Washingtonians have improved health outcomes and thriving.

Leadership WNAC

Since 2010, much of WNAC focused on nursing leadership and aligning its work with other initiatives to reduce duplicative efforts. The [*Nurses on Boards Coalition*](#) (NOBC) was one such initiative. Nationally, NOBC's goal has been to get 10,000 nurses on non-nursing organizational boards by 2020 with a subgoal of broadening nursing's influence to institutional and legislative policy. WNAC used its networks to get the word out as well as develop opportunities for board membership and gateway leadership positions that might prepare nurses for board membership. This included partnering with the Health Care Authority (HCA) in 2015 to get nurses on committees responsible for implementing a five-year Medicaid demonstration project that launched in 2016 called the [*Healthier Washington Initiative*](#) (HWI), such as the Health Innovations Leadership Network and Health Equity Accelerator Committee.

Using Leadership to Advance Health Equity and a Culture of Health

Recognizing that health outcomes and the inequitable disparities seen among them are due in large part to the social determinants of health (SDOH), WNAC began to weave in health equity as part of its explicit focus with the intent of widening the definition of health and strengthening cross-sector collaboration for holistic care. This aligned well with HCA's focus on "whole-person health" as part of HWI, the Washington State Hospital Association's support of the American Hospital Association's [*#123forEquity*](#) campaign (started in 2015), and a national effort by RWJF to promote a [*Culture of Health*](#). To do this thoughtfully, WNAC surveyed nurses about their awareness of SDOH in 2016. Responses among a sample of about 300 nurses indicated only 29% were aware of SDOH, with the majority identified as public health nurses. Through a grant from the HCA, WNAC put together an educational video called, "[*A Healthier Washington State Starts With Nurses*](#)" in 2017 and then conducted a post-test: Awareness rose to 48%.

The next phase of this work emerged as a qualitative research study to justify building SDOH into care plans. A student in a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program created a toolkit as her capstone project with WCN. With a *Campaign for Action* grant through RWJF's Public Health Nurse Leaders program, WCN hired a public health professional in 2018 who managed a core team of WNAC members (under the guidance of the full WNAC membership) to launch the study. Participants, including nurses and other health professionals involved with care transitions statewide, were shown the educational video and asked about their experiences screening for and addressing SDOH. Currently, this data is being analyzed and written up for publication. Secondary aims included creating an SDOH resource guide and find ways to inform nursing education as well, but these aims were not feasible during this grant period. WNAC successfully submitted abstracts to present at a few different conferences on preliminary results.

WNAC successfully received a two-year *Campaign for Action* [*Innovations Fund*](#) grant in 2019. This was initially designed so that select facilities that participated in focus groups could pilot SDOH screening tools or other protocols refined through lessons learned by their nurses and track changes in short-term measures of health and/or equity, such as reduced hospital readmissions or the provision of an SDOH resource. Because WNAC received a four-fold increase in participation and because groups did not necessarily represent one facility, the grant aim shifted to finding facilities willing to pilot a tool or protocol of their choice. Several facilities showed interest, but currently only one has signed a Memorandum of Understanding to solidify the commitment; others had to delay, if not withdraw, because of COVID-19. A second application was recently submitted for the same grant under a new grant cycle with a different aim: The

National Alliance for Filipino Concerns is assessing and responding to the needs of the Filipino community. The Washington chapter is responding to social isolation, housing and access to care in the Seattle area, particularly among the elderly. WNAC hopes to secure grant funding in the future to assess the patient perspective on SDOH so that bridging gaps is sustainable and driven by the patient's rather than the practitioner's priorities.

The Future of Nursing

The next *Future of Nursing* report is expected to be published in March of 2021 by the National Academy of Medicine. However, health equity has been amplified through anti-racism efforts nationwide and is likely to be a centerpiece of the report. As such, WNAC intends to continue its work in health equity and building a Culture of Health while explicitly using an anti-racism lens in all its work. This includes reviewing WNAC's membership base and expanding it to include and give equal power to the voices of those who represent diverse backgrounds and perspectives. WNAC is looking at demographics like race and ethnicity, geographic region of the state, and experience, among others. In addition, WNAC will reach across sectors, if not state lines, both in and outside of nursing and with respect for all SDOH. WNAC recognizes that nursing leadership means both advancing current and developing new nursing leaders and will continue to do both. Looking externally, WNAC would like its work to address racism in terms of how both the wellness of patients and practitioners suffer from institutions and policies that are racist or do not promote and enforce anti-racism behaviors.

Timeline of Key Events

- 2008: RWJF and IOM partner to transform nursing profession
- 2010: IOM publishes *Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*
RWJF and AARP partner to create:
 - *Campaign for Action* and state "action coalitions"
 - Nurses on Boards CoalitionWCN hosts event on IOM recommendations
WA's "Action Coalition" is born and focuses on "promoting nursing leadership"
- 2014: RWJF announces vision of a "Culture of Health"
- 2015: AHA / WSHA start #123forEquity Campaign
- 2016: Health Care Authority (HCA) launches Healthier WA Initiative (HWI)
WNAC places nurses on HWI committees and commissions
WNAC surveys nurses about SDOH awareness: 29%
- 2017: HCA funds SDOH video: "A Healthier WA State Starts With Nurses"
WNAC surveys nurses about SDOH awareness: 48%
WCN hosts DNP student who creates focus group toolkit on SDOH
- 2018: WNAC receives *Campaign for Action* grant through RWJF's Public Health Nurse Leaders' program
WCN hires program manager to launch focus group study using toolkit
WCN completes SDOH "listening sessions" for *Campaign for Action*
- 2019: WNAC secures IRB approval and launches focus group study
WNAC chosen to present at select conferences
WNAC chosen as "state exemplar" for National Academy of Medicine *Future of Nursing* panel
WNAC receives *Campaign for Action* Innovations Fund for SDOH screening tool pilot
- 2020: WNAC receives *Campaign for Action* Innovations Fund to support Bayanihan King County