

2024 Legislative Platform

The Delaware Nurses Association (DNA) advocates for the enactment and implementation of legislation and public policy that will preserve and advance the identity, integrity, and impact of the nursing profession. Additionally, the DNA supports legislation and public policy that promotes the health, safety, welfare, and equity for all living in Delaware.



Workplace Violence

Violence against nurses, or any health care professional, is not “part of the job” and is unacceptable. Violence against nurses occurs in all health care settings so it must be addressed in all health care settings.



We support workplace violence legislation and policies that focus on prevention, reporting, transparency, shared governance, training (both public and workforce), civility-promoting activities, enhanced penalties for the perpetrator, and ongoing support for the affected.



We advocate for legislative and policy changes across the board, partnering with law enforcement and the judicial branch of state government, as this is a systemic problem that directly contributes to adverse health outcomes.



Culture of Safety

A Culture of Safety in healthcare is necessary to improve outcomes for those served, as well as those providing care and services. A healthy and embedded culture of safety promotes active involvement in positive and sustained changes from all members of the team and non-punitive responses to errors.



Safe Staffing. We support the development and implementation of valid, reliable, and consistent nurse staffing plans with safe nurse-to-patient standards that are based upon the American Nurses Association’s Principles for Nurse Staffing and other national specialty nursing association guidance. These plans must be created and maintained in coordination with direct care nurses, based on each area’s practice environments and patient population.



Just Culture. We advocate for legislation, policies, and enhanced leadership at all levels built upon Just Culture principles, including safe, non-punitive error reporting. We oppose the criminalization of unintentional medical/nursing errors.



→ Health Equity

Societal and systemic inequities, including social determinants of health, disproportionately affect disenfranchised and vulnerable communities. The nursing profession was founded upon and continues to care for all communities with respect for their inherent dignity and worth.

- **Access to Quality Health Care.** We support legislation and policies that increase access to high-quality, affordable, accessible, and equitable health care services for all in Delaware, ideally in the community and in the least restrictive setting.
- **Healthcare Providers.** We support legislation and policies that increases access to all licensed nurses and other healthcare providers, especially specialized services like behavioral health, to ensure all in Delaware can access the healthcare services they need.
- **Connected/Telehealth Care.** We support legislation and policies that increase access to equitable, regulated, high-quality, and safe connected/telehealth services.
- **APRN Reimbursement.** We support legislation and policies that facilitate APRNs supporting and expanding access to health care services with full and equitable reimbursement for services provided.
- **Social Determinants of Health.** We support legislation and policies that improve health equity through addressing social determinants.

→ Global/Environmental Health

Environmental factors and human health strongly intersect, creating positive and negative impacts on health outcomes. The growing volume of evidence demonstrates climate change is directly linked to health and will continue to have a negative impact unless interventions are put into place now. Additionally, the health care system itself is a significant contributor to climate change and generation of non-recyclable waste.

- We support legislation and policies that reduce or eliminate harmful chemicals, products, pollutants, and hazards detrimental to the overall health of all in Delaware and the environment.
- We advocate for legislation and policies that aim to mitigate local, regional, national and international climate change to protect the public's health.
- We advocate for transformative practices within health care organization's supply chains that promote sustainability and reduces medical waste.





Workforce

In Delaware, and across the world, nurses are the largest and most trusted sector of the licensed healthcare workforce. Our workforce development must be prioritized. All license types (LPN, RN, APRN) and entry to licensure education programs (LPN, diploma, associates, and undergraduate) are valued and necessary. Public health emergencies have exacerbated pervasive nurse well-being opportunities related to burnout, compassion fatigue, secondary trauma, turnover, and more which directly impact our workforce growth.



Nurse Well-being. We advocate for and support comprehensive, statewide nurse well-being strategies and resources that center on access, equity, trust, practicality, community and accountability.



Education & Development.

- We support legislation and policies that focus on removing financial barriers and educating more citizens from all diverse backgrounds to enter the nursing profession, through one of several entry points, and then placing nurses on an academic progression plan that matches their personal and professional goals and improves outcomes for the population/s served.
- We recognize the longstanding nursing faculty shortage and support legislation and policies that recruit and retain qualified nursing faculty and increase physical educational space to expand Delaware's nursing education program capacity and student/faculty retention and success.
- We support legislation and policies that address nurse preceptor and clinical placement opportunities across all educational programs.



Valuing the Nurse. We advocate for increased roles, visibility, and valuing of contributions and achievement of outcomes from all licensed nurses, in all practice settings, in organizational, state, regional, national, and international forums.

