



OREGON OFFICE  
12730 SE 27th Avenue  
Milwaukie, OR 97222

215-821-4004 PHONE  
215-731-2400 FAX

MAIN OFFICE  
Centre Square East  
1500 Market Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19102

215-731-7145 PHONE  
215-731-2400 FAX

[WWW.NNCC.US](http://WWW.NNCC.US)

## Testimony of the National Nurse-Led Care Consortium

Prepared for the U.S. House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human

Services, and Education, and Related Agencies

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Health Resources and Services Administration

March 8, 2017

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the National Nurse-Led Care Consortium (NNCC), I am pleased to present the U.S. House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies with this testimony relating to Nursing Workforce Development programs (authorized under Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act [42 U.S.C. 296 et seq.]) **NNCC requests \$244 million for the Health Resources and Services Administration's Title VIII nursing workforce programs.** NNCC supports nurse-led care and nurses at the front lines of care. The organization's mission is to advance nurse-led healthcare through policy, consultation, and programs to reduce health disparities and meet people's primary care needs. Because of their education and community connections, advanced practice nurses today are able to deliver high quality and cost-effective services to our most vulnerable populations: the poor and the uninsured. The health centers and practices NNCC represents are primarily run by nurse practitioners. Nurse practitioners and other advanced practice nurses offer patient-centered care that is sensitive to patient needs and concerns. NNCC assists these nurses by advocating for policy reforms that increase access to nurse-led care, designing community-based programs that address public health needs, and offering expert technical assistance that enhances the

sustainability of innovative nurse-led practice models. As part of its mission to support nurse-led care, NNCC represents nonprofit, nurse-managed health clinics (sometimes called nurse-managed health centers or NMHCs). Section 254c-1a of the Public Health Service Act defines the term ‘nurse-managed health clinic’ as a “nurse-practice arrangement, managed by advanced practice nurses, that provides primary care or wellness services to underserved or vulnerable populations and that is associated with a school, college, university or department of nursing, federally qualified health center (FQHC), or independent nonprofit health or social services agency.” Recent estimates indicate that there are approximately 500 nurse-managed clinics nationwide, including birthing centers and school-based clinics, and 250 of these NMHCs deliver primary and preventive care. These primary and preventive care NMHCs provide a full range of health services, including health promotion and disease prevention, to low-income, underinsured, and uninsured clients. Approximately 58% of NMHC patients are either uninsured, Medicaid recipients, or self-pay. Also, several NMHCs are FQHCs.

Because many NMHCs are affiliated with schools of nursing, NMHCs also help to build the capacity of the community-based health care workforce by acting as teaching and practice sites for nursing students and other health professionals. Each academically-affiliated NMHC provides clinical placements for an average of 50 to 60 students a year.<sup>1</sup> These students include graduate and undergraduate nursing students, as well as medical, physician assistant, and social work students. Students participating in post-clinical focus groups express a high level of satisfaction with NMHC-based clinical placements, commenting that their experience in NMHCs highlighted the need to reduce health care disparities and respect patient diversity. A large percentage of the federal funding for academically-affiliated NMHCs comes from the Title VIII

---

<sup>1</sup> NNCC, 2012 NNCC Membership Survey (2012)

Nurse Education, Practice, Quality, and Retention Program (NEPQR) program. Granting the requested appropriation will help ensure that NMHCs can continue accessing resources provided by the NEPQR program. NMHC placements are particularly important to nursing education, because they offer nursing students direct experience working in underserved communities. NMHC placements also provide students with the opportunity to form relationships with nurse mentors working in leadership roles that can help build important business development and practice management skills, which are often underemphasized in traditional nursing school curriculums.

According to the American Association of Medical Colleges, the country faces a projected shortfall of 14,900 to 35,600 physicians by 2025. Simultaneously, primary care office visits are expected to increase by 3.8% nationally, coupled with a 2.2% increase in emergency room visits.<sup>2</sup> NMHC clinical placements help to address this shortage by providing advanced practice nursing students with specialized clinical experiences that prepare them to offer community-based primary care in underserved communities most affected by provider shortages. Therefore, by funding Title VIII nursing workforce development programs at the requested level, Congress can not only strengthen the nursing workforce, but also help bolster the nation's overtaxed primary care provider workforce.

**For the above reasons, NNCC again requests \$244 million for the Nursing Workforce Development programs in FY 2018.** I appreciate the opportunity to submit this testimony. If you have any questions, I can be reached at (267) 765-2363 or [ndlink@nncc.us](mailto:ndlink@nncc.us).

---

<sup>2</sup> The Commonwealth Fund. "How Will the Affordable Care Act Affect the Use of Health Care Services?" <http://www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/issue-briefs/2015/feb/how-will-aca-affect-use-health-services>

Very truly yours,

Nancy De Leon Link

Nancy De Leon Link

Chief Executive Officer

National Nurse-Led Care Consortium