

The American Nurses Association Designates Nephrology Nursing as a Recognized Nursing Specialty!

In my July-August 2005 *Nephrology Nursing Journal* President's message, I described a number of partnerships that ANNA had formed recently. I mentioned that ANNA had submitted an application to the American Nurses Association (ANA) seeking recognition of nephrology nursing as a nursing specialty and requesting approval of the specialty's scope of practice statement, and acknowledgement of the nephrology nursing standards of practice.

I am pleased to announce that nephrology nursing is now a recognized specialty by the ANA. In a letter dated October 27, 2005, Susan Tallai-McGuinness, MPA, PhD, RN, Chairperson of the American Nursing Association Congress of Nursing Practice and Economics (the Congress), wrote "Congratulations are in order. The Congress completed its review of the application and found all criteria were met for the designation of nephrology nursing as a recognized nursing specialty, approval of the published nephrology nursing scope of practice statement, and acknowledgement of the published nephrology nursing standards of practice. Again, congratulations."



The Application Process

The rigorous process for the recognition is summarized below.

In June, Past President Caroline Counts and NNJ Editor/Past President Beth Ulrich prepared a 31-page document (plus numerous attachments) in response to 14 criteria for recognition as a nursing specialty for review, 12 criteria for approval of a Scope Statement, 8 criteria for Standards of Practice Review Criteria, 6 criteria for Standards of Professional Performance Review, and 6 criteria for General Review. The application serves as such an excellent summary of the history of nephrology nurses and ANNA, that it is now available on the ANNA website (www.annanurse.org). Click "About ANNA,"

then "The Association".

The application concludes with these words:

"For over 35 years, ANNA and its constituents have guided and advanced the practice of nephrology nursing and made our voices heard on issues affecting nephrology nurses and the patients we serve. We have built and maintained a solid foundation for nephrology nursing practice, positively affected the lives of hundreds of thousands of people with kidney disease and its complications through our care and our advocacy, and served as a catalyst and facilitator for nephrology nurses to network with each other to improve the practices of individuals and nephrology nursing as a whole."

On behalf of all nephrology nurses and members of ANNA over the past 37 years, I would like to thank Caroline and Beth for their leadership in preparing the application and to Sally Burrows-Hudson and Barbara Prowant, Editors of the *Nephrology Nursing Standards of Practice and Guidelines for Care*, for their commitment and vision. The formal recognition of nephrology nursing as a nursing specialty by ANA will add to credibility within the public, policy, and health care communities for years to come.

**Suzann VanBuskirk, BSN, RN, CNN
ANNA President
Member, Baltimore Chapter**

Why Is This Nursing Specialty Recognition Important?

The background section of the ANA's Specialty Nursing Recognition application states "The rapidly changing health care environment's demands, including certification of specialty practitioners, created the need to develop consistent, standardized processes for recognizing specialty areas of nursing practice, approving scope of practice statements, and acknowledging specialty nursing standards. ANA continues to provide these services to the profession."

The requirements for specialty nursing recognition are based on the following ANA foundational documents that provide a framework for nurses in the larger domains of practice, education, administration, and research, as well as in more discrete areas of specialty practice:

Nursing's Social Policy Statement, Second Edition (ANA, 2003) – describes professional nursing's accountability to the public and identifies the processes for self-regulation, professional regulation, and legal regulation as mechanisms to maintain that trust.

Code of Ethics for Nurses With Interpretive Statements (ANA, 2001) – provides significant guidance for all nurses and nursing practice in every setting.

Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice (ANA, 2004) – presents more detail in further defining the scope and standards of practice for all registered nurses, including the advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) and the nurse working in a role specialty. ANNA adapted this document to nephrology nurses in the *Nephrology Nursing Standards of Practice and Guidelines for Care (2005)*.

References

- American Nurses Association. (2001). *Code of ethics for nurses with interpretive statements*. Washington, DC: Author.
- American Nurses Association. (2003). *Nursing's social policy statement*. Washington, DC: Author.
- American Nurses Association. (2004). *Nursing: Scope and standards of practice*. Washington, DC: Author.

ANNA's Mission

ANNA will advance nephrology nursing practice and positively influence outcomes for patients with kidney or other disease processes requiring replacement therapies through advocacy, scholarship, and excellence.