**Educational Preparation for Indiana Professional Registered Nurses**

**Position Statement Prepared by the Indiana Organization of Nurse Executives**

**2014**

The Indiana Organization of Nurse Executives (IONE) recognizes and supports the need for an educated professional nursing workforce in the State of Indiana.

IONE supports a culture of life-long learning in nursing. Entry-level education for Registered Nurses in Indiana has occurred at the Associate of Science Degree in Nursing (ASN), Diploma, or Bachelors of Science in Nursing (BSN) preparation levels. Evidence supports nurses prepared with BSN degrees have displayed a positive impact on lowering mortality rates (Estabrooks et al., 2005; Tourangeau et al., 2007), better outcomes and improved patient safety (Fagin, 2001; Delgado, 2002) than their peers with an ASN degree. BSN prepared nurses have been correlated with reduced surgical patient mortality and failure to rescue, recognizing improved post operative patient care outcomes (Aiken et al., 2003).

IONE believes that health care transformation requires the professional nurse not only be competent in bedside clinical skills, but also competent to meet the needs of future complex healthcare delivery systems. Future professional nurses will require knowledge in nursing theory, evidence based practice, research, leadership, health promotion, case management, care coordination, patient education, quality improvement, patient safety principles, multidisciplinary team work, and the use of health information technologies. Without a more expansively educated professional nursing workforce, the nation’s health is at risk.

IONE supports the Institute of Medicine’s (IOM) Report *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Healthcare.* Nursing education must prepare the professional nurse to meet the patients’ diverse and complex needs, advance nursing practice, and provide safe, quality patient care in a variety of healthcare setting across the continuum of care. The IOM Future of Nursing Report specifically recommends increasing the proportion of BSN prepared nurses to 80 percent by 2020. (The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Heath, 2011).

IONE recognizes to meet the future challenges for a more accessible, cost-effective and high-quality health care system, the Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree is the minimum education required for professional nursing practice. The American Organization of Nurse Executives (AONE) advocates that RNs advance their education to include baccalaureate and graduate degrees. In 2005, AONE was recognized with the BSN Champion Award from the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) for releasing a statement advocating the baccalaureate degree as the appropriate preparation for RNs (AONE, 2012). The American Nurses Association (ANA) supports minimum preparation for beginning professional nursing practice should be at the baccalaureate degree education in nursing (ANA, 1965). The American Association of College of Nurses (AACN) supports baccalaureate-level preparation for entry into professional nursing practice (AACN, 2005). The National League for Nursing (NLN) promotes academic progression within nursing to create new models of academic progression that moves graduates to advanced degrees (NLN, 2007).

Whereas:

IONE supports the BSN degree as the standard for entry into professional nursing practice. IONE understands that Indiana has over 100,000 Registered Nurses and approximately 50% are educationally prepared at the BSN degree or higher. IONE acknowledges the various levels of entry into nursing practice and is committed to partnering with schools of nursing; nursing and healthcare organizations; nursing, healthcare and governmental leaders and agencies to facilitate a successful transition to reach the IOM recommendation of 80% BSN by 2020 in Indiana.

References:

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