



National Association of Neonatal Nurses

4700 W. Lake Avenue • Glenview, IL 60025-1485
847/375-3660 • 800/451-3795 • Fax 888/477-6266
www.nann.org • E-mail info@nann.org

Carole Kenner, DNS, RNC, FAAN
Dean/Professor
University of Oklahoma
College of Nursing
1100 North Stonewall Avenue
Oklahoma City, OK 73117

Dear Carole,

The Board of Directors of the National Association of Neonatal Nurses (NANN) has reviewed and discussed the consensus statement **Essential Nursing Competencies and Curricula Guidelines for Genetics and Genomics**. It is clear that the authors and key stakeholders worked diligently to build a set of competencies to address the spectrum of nursing education, roles and practice.

While the Board understands that the competencies provide a broad general educational directive for nurses at all levels of practice and in all roles, concern was expressed about the implication of some of the competencies, particularly for the nurses in clinical practice as a bedside caregiver. This document clearly appears to be geared toward providing guidance to educators. NANN questions how the workforce environment will be changed so that nursing can responsibly and realistically incorporate these expectations in the clinical practice setting. The talking points indicate that "Organizations" would "support and promote initiatives to implement the competencies". What initiative would be expected and who would cover the cost of these? What are the resources to support this type of change? The wording in particular areas of the statement, including the competencies, may lead one to believe that nurses are being asked to step beyond their legal limits of practice as prescribed by their state's Board of Nursing.

Specific areas of concern are as follows:

In the Background section, there is an example which states, "facilitate drug selection or dosage in treatment of an adult with cancer based on molecular markers." While nurses review, counsel and educate related to medication therapy, the wording of statement does not clearly delineate the activities of the bedside caregiver from the Advanced Practice Nurse. There is concern by the Board that this statement may be viewed as encroachment into the area of prescribing, which would be in opposition to most state nursing practice directives for general nursing practice.

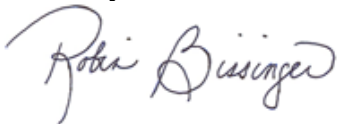
In the competencies listed under the Professional Practice Domain: Nursing Assessment applying/integrating genetic and genomic knowledge one competency states, **"Constructs pedigree from collected family history information using standardized symbols and terminology."** This is an educational goal that is noteworthy in nursing

education. However, while it is understood that a family history provides a significant insight into disease risk and occurrence for an individual, the practicality of pedigree construction for the bedside caregiver is in question.

Finally, in the competencies listed under the Professional Practice Domain: Provision of Education, Care and Support a competency states, “**Collaborates with insurance providers/payers to facilitate reimbursement for genetic and genomic health care services.**” There is no mention in this specific competency of the importance of maintaining patient confidentiality. Ethics are nominally addressed in the Professional Practice Domain under Identification. This is a significant source of concern. Dealing with the ethics of a particular aspect of disease and care often lags behind diagnostics and therapies. The Board feels that it is important to either include language about the maintenance and protection of confidentiality, or have a separate and very clear competency focusing on ethics and information gathering as pertains to genetics/genomics.

While the Board of Directors of NANN respects the efforts the authors and key stakeholders of the Competencies put forth in this endeavor to address an increasingly important aspect of care, the Board is unable to unanimously approve the Competencies as written. While the Competencies provide a significant educational directive, further refinement as noted in this response is recommended by the Board in order to remove any confusion, and provide realistic directives for education and practice.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robin Bissinger". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Robin Bissinger, MSN RNC NNP
NANN, President