

2011 Advocacy Highlights



**National
Association of
Neonatal
Nurses**

**National Association of
Neonatal Nurse Practitioners**

A division of NANN



RSV Prophylaxis

NANN believes that the changes in the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) guidelines for immunoprophylaxis for respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) left many infants vulnerable by reducing the number of doses they receive during the RSV season. The denial of full seasonal coverage based on gestational age, without consideration of other risk factors, discriminates against a selected population of premature infants and may put certain populations at even greater risk because of health disparities.

NANN collected signatures of 1,031 members on a petition to request that the Advisory Committee for Immunization Practices (ACIP) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention endorse the National Perinatal Association's guideline statement "Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Prevention 2010" for immunoprophylaxis dosing criteria and delivered the petition to the ACIP RSV Work Group in Atlanta, GA. Two months later, the work group was disbanded. Next, NANN joined with the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (NAPNAP), the AAP Perinatal Section, and the AAP Committee on the Fetus and Newborn to endorse a resolution to evaluate the current evidence on RSV immunoprophylaxis. This resolution was defeated at the AAP leadership meeting in March 2011. Along with NAPNAP and the National Black Nurses Association, NANN requested that AAP's president and executive director revisit this issue but had received no response as of August 25, 2011.

Consensus Model for APRN Regulation

NANN endorsed the *Consensus Model for APRN Regulation* when it was first published in 2008. In May 2011 NANNP was invited to be part of the APRN Roundtable (the National Council of State Boards of Nursing group that collaborated with the APRN Consensus Work Group to craft the model), and we continue to represent the neonatal population focus in the national arena.

Nursing Workforce Issues

NANN has worked in partnership with the Americans for Nursing Shortage Relief and the Nursing Community on the issue of funding for nursing workforce development. Throughout the year, NANN signed letters to elected officials requesting action on nursing workforce appropriations and other issues related to funding of workforce development programs, nursing research, and nurse-related initiatives of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010.

Universal Screening for Congenital Heart Disease

In 2011, NANN identified universal screening for congenital heart disease (CHD), using pulse oximetry performed after 24 hours of life, as an important advocacy issue. We have closely monitored this issue, following the decision of the Secretary's Advisory Committee on Heritable Disorders in Newborns and Children of the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to add pulse oximetry screening for critical CHD to the recommended uniform screening panel for newborns. NANN has been monitoring state activity on this issue and has notified members when states have introduced or passed legislation. In July 2011, NANN sent HRSA Secretary Kathleen Sebelius a letter expressing support for universal pulse oximetry screening for CHD and urging HRSA to move this initiative forward.

Endocrine Disruptors

On behalf of the vulnerable population of preterm infants, NANN has been monitoring and supporting legislation related to endocrine disruptors, particularly those present in the NICU environment. With the introduction of the Endocrine-Disrupting Chemicals Exposure Elimination Act of 2011 in both Congressional chambers, NANN has educated and kept members up-to-date on this issue, released a "Call to Action," and guided advocacy efforts by individual members.

National Task Force on Quality Nurse Practitioner Education (NTF)

NANNP represented the neonatal population focus on the NTF, which was reconvened to review its 2008 *Criteria for Evaluation of Nurse Practitioner Programs* in light of the 2008 *Consensus Model for APRN Regulation*. The NTF plans to have its revision completed by fall 2011.

National Task Force for Population-Focused Competencies

Following the release of the newly revised *Nurse Practitioner Core Competencies* by the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties in April 2011, NANNP was asked to represent the neonatal population focus on the National Task Force for Population-Focused Competencies. These competencies will be based on those that NANNP developed in its *Education Standards and Curriculum Guidelines for Neonatal Nurse Practitioner Programs* (2009) and the *Competencies and Orientation Tool Kit for Neonatal Nurse Practitioners* (2010).

Involving Members in Advocacy

Member Education

Member education was a prominent theme during NANN's 2010 Annual Educational Conference in Las Vegas. Members of the Health Policy and Advocacy (HP&A) Committee welcomed conference attendees to their booth in the exhibit hall, where they discussed issues, shared advocacy opportunities, connected members with online grassroots advocacy resources, and recruited state liaisons to serve as links to the committee on state advocacy issues. Committee members presented sessions on key advocacy issues and ways to become involved and also held a breakfast roundtable for those interested in advocacy. Advocacy activities will continue at each national NANN meeting, and a preconference workshop, "Advocacy 101: Finding Your Voice," will be held in 2011.

Advocacy Opportunities

The HP&A Committee has started an Advocacy Member Community on MyNANN (my.nann.org) and a discussion group to inform members about advocacy issues and motivate and assist them to take action.

State Advocacy Liaisons

To collect and disseminate information on state-level health policy and advocacy issues, the HP&A Committee created a work group of volunteer state liaisons, with the goal of having at least one liaison from each state. Currently, 25 states are represented by 32 volunteers.

NANN on the Hill: The Nurse in Washington Internship

Each year NANN has offered scholarships to two NANN members for the Nurse in Washington Internship program. In 2011, an application and selection process was developed that opened the scholarship to all members for the first time. Cindi Acree and Sherry Mason were selected to attend and had the opportunity to meet with their Congressional representatives to discuss advocacy issues.



Looking Ahead: 2012 Advocacy Priorities

Although NANN's advocacy agenda is broad, the association has identified six primary advocacy issues for its focus in 2012:

- National adoption of the *Consensus Model for APRN Regulation*
- Nursing workforce development
- Universal screening for congenital heart disease
- Endocrine disruptors
- Reimbursement for donor human milk for preterm infants
- The Doctor of Nursing Practice degree as a requirement for entry into practice for APRNs

Watch for advocacy updates

in NANN's communication vehicles—

NANN E-News, NANN Central, and Advances in Neonatal Care.