

## An 'Action-Oriented Blueprint' for the Future of Nursing

*The new IOM report maps the way.*

**O**n October 5, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) released a new report, *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*, an unequivocal call to action for all who care about improving health care in this country. The report, the result of a two-year Initiative on the Future of Nursing by the IOM and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), lays out a vision of a future health care system that would make high-quality care accessible to all, promote wellness and disease prevention, reliably improve health outcomes, and provide compassionate care throughout a person's lifespan. Nurses—the largest segment of the health care workforce—are essential to making this vision a reality because of their frontline role in patient care and the bonds they form with patients and family members.

As a nurse and as the RWJF's senior nursing advisor, I strongly believe that we cannot address the myriad challenges confronting our health care system without addressing the challenges facing the nursing profession. Over the years, the RWJF has made significant investments in the profession to develop nursing leadership, support research, build evidence-based models of care, and encourage collaboration among health professionals. The Initiative on the Future of Nursing furthered those investments and offered the RWJF an opportunity to partner with the IOM in finding solutions to the

challenges confronting our profession. This report represents the finest kind of collaboration among experts and health professionals from a wide range of fields.

The report contains bold recommendations for "an action-oriented blueprint for the future

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of nursing." The recommendations call for significant improvements in public and institutional policies at the national, state, and local levels to improve health and health care. They seek to remove scope-of-practice barriers, so that nurses can utilize the full extent of their education and training. They seek to foster interprofessional collaboration, so that nurses can act as full partners with physicians and other health care professionals in conducting research and redesigning our health care system. They call for increasing the proportion of nurses with baccalaureates from 50% to 80% and for doubling the number of nurses with doctorates by 2020. They call on health care organizations and nursing schools to implement residency programs. They advocate nursing leadership at every level of the profession; and they call for the creation of an infrastructure for the collection and analysis of interprofessional health care workforce data.

To advance these recommendations, the RWJF is taking steps to engage leaders from both the public and the private sectors and inspire them to action. To that end, in November a collaboration between the RWJF and AARP was announced—the RWJF Initiative on the Future of Nursing: Campaign for Action—which will strive to involve a wide range of stakeholders. As part of this effort, I'll direct a broad-based coalition of organizations that represent hospitals and health care systems, insurance companies and other payers, educational institutions, state and federal governments, consumers, and nurses and other health care professionals. And on November 30 and December 1, the IOM and the RWJF convened the National Summit on Advancing Health Through Nursing in Washington, DC, to launch the initiative's implementation phase and chart its course. I was one of about 500 health care providers, foundation executives, thought leaders, and other stakeholders in attendance; their energy and enthusiasm reinforced my belief that nursing workforce challenges must be addressed as societal issues—they concern *everyone* who considers health and health care a priority.

It will take all of us to usher in the future of nursing. I urge you to get involved. Visit [www.thefutureofnursing.org](http://www.thefutureofnursing.org) to learn more about the recommendations, sign up for e-mail updates, and access toolkits and other resources. Let's get to work! ▼