

# WASHINGTON STATE NURSES ASSOCIATION

## RESOLUTION #1

### WSNA Support for Universal Access and Health Care Reform

WHEREAS, A recently released report by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) estimates that U.S. health care spending will nearly double to \$4.1 trillion by 2016 and account for 20 percent of every dollar spent and that total out-of-pocket health care spending will also double from \$250.6 billion in 2006 to about \$440.8 billion by 2016.

WHEREAS, Since 1972, WSNA has strongly supported universal access to quality health care for all Washingtonians, and

WHEREAS, In 2007, there are now more than 600,000 Washingtonians without health care coverage, including 73,000 children and this number continues to increase, and

WHEREAS, In 2005 the American Nurse Association (ANA) updated its 1991 comprehensive health care reform proposal: *Nursing's Agenda for Health Care Reform*, and

WHEREAS, There are numerous legislative and employer-based proposals to increase access to medical insurance currently under consideration in Washington State and nationally, and

WHEREAS, Improving access to medical insurance is only one part of achieving a comprehensive program of universal access to quality, affordable health care for all,

BE IT THEREFORE

RESOLVED, That WSNA, using the ANA's *2005 Nursing's Agenda for Health Care Reform* as a benchmark, continue to support legislative and policy efforts toward achieving universal access to safe, quality affordable health care for all Washingtonians, and be it further

RESOLVED, That the WSNA General Assembly encourage the WSNA Legislative and Health Policy Council and the WSNA Board of Directors to develop strategies and partnerships that challenge health care legislators, policy makers, employers and the public to place a higher priority on providing comprehensive health insurance coverage and access to safe, quality health care services for all Washingtonians at an affordable price, and be it further

RESOLVED, That WSNA, in pursuing these efforts, continue to strongly advocate for consumer access to a full range of health provider and health care services that include registered nurses as providers.

Submitted on behalf of the WSNA Legislative and Health Policy Council

Approved by WSNA Board of Directors, March 5, 2007

**Adopted by the WSNA General Assembly, May 3, 2007**

## **Cost Impact Statement**

### **Justification:**

Every year since 1965, health care expenditure inflation has risen at rates typically two or three times, and occasionally four times the rate of economy wide inflation. The limited focus and segmented reform efforts in the '70s, 80s, 90s and 2000s have failed to remedy this problem. The result is U.S. citizens pay more for less care and no current comprehensive proposals at either the state or national levels address this important societal problem.

This resolution will help prepare the WSNA and registered nurses in Washington state to take a leadership role and ready itself for the next round of reforms in 2007-2010. With preparation, the nursing profession can and should help shape a comprehensive remodeling of the way health care is delivered and paid for in the United States and Washington State. It is time to enact the vision of *Nursing's Agenda for Health Care Reform* (1991) that was recently updated by ANA in 2005.

### **Proposed Implementation Activities**

1. Continue to work with the Governor and WA State Legislature as well as other nursing and advocacy groups and coalitions to influence the content of reform proposals and support legislative and policy efforts toward achieving universal access to safe, quality affordable health care for all Washington residents that includes consumer access to a full range of health provider and health care services that include registered nurses as providers.
2. Develop educational and other strategies and partnerships with health care legislators, policy makers, employers.
3. Include the principles from *Nursing's Agenda for Health Care Reform* as part of the WSNA-PAC Health IQ

### **Possible Benefits:**

Increased awareness of nurses, employers, policy-makers and the public about the importance of the principles included in *Nursing's Agenda for Health Care Reform* and the importance of achieving true access to "care" not just access to "insurance." Nurses will be at the table to help shape a comprehensive remodeling of the way health care is delivered and paid for in the Washington State.

### **Range of Direct Costs:**

Direct costs are estimated to range from \$10,000 to \$25,000 annually for costs of developing policy, drafting and evaluating proposals and conducting educational workshops and related materials. Additional include costs of activities related to:

- Staff time to develop briefing materials, articles for publication and other media strategies
- Staff time to work with the Governor's Office, the Washington State Legislature and other appropriate regulatory agencies
- Continued coalition work with WCN, WNLC, other nursing organizations health care reform coalitions and other advocacy groups to develop and support comprehensive health care reform proposals.
- Policy Analyst time as needed
- Contract Lobbyist time as needed