



American Academy of Nursing

transforming health care policy and practice through nursing knowledge

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Responding to questions related to future physician and nursing shortages, American Academy of Nursing President Catherine L. Gilliss addressed the issue with a team-based approach, championing the need to further utilize advanced practice nurses, while emphasizing the basic necessity of producing more health care providers – nurse or physician – to improve care for patients.

Gilliss' response was published on March 2 by Remapping Debate, entitled "Nurses to the Rescue?" It can be viewed at <http://remappingdebate.org/>.

"I think the evidence is in place that given that we're educating everybody to a particular level and they are passing certified exams, there is some waste of healthcare delivery capacity when states restrict the ability of nurses to practice at the top of their license," Gilliss said in the article.

Excerpt from the article:

"Right now, there's a service that people aren't getting," Gilliss said. "That's the coordination of care [between healthcare professionals]." If there existed the capacity for some nurses to be in charge of organizing every patient's healthcare, the quality of care would improve, as well as the patient's experience.

Gilliss maintained that viewing healthcare workforce policy as a zero-sum equation where either doctors or nurses are forced to lose out would be a mistake, and that the U.S. should strive to produce more physicians and more nurses. She said that increasing education and training would come with costs, but that the costs of a long-term shortage of physicians or nurses would be greater.

"I think it would be silly to assume that adding more [healthcare workers] would not cost more," she said. "It's a matter of priorities."

Read more at: <http://remappingdebate.org/article/nurses-rescue?page=0,0>

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The American Academy of Nursing (www.aannet.org) anticipates and tracks national and international trends in health care, while addressing resulting issues of health care knowledge and policy. The Academy's mission is to serve the public and nursing profession by advancing health policy and practice through the generation, synthesis, and dissemination of nursing knowledge.