



American Academy of Nursing
transforming health care policy and practice through nursing knowledge

American Academy of Nursing Releases Policy Brief on Leveraging the Nonprofit Hospital Community Benefit Requirement

Academy Urges Efforts to Focus Community Benefit Activities on Addressing Social Determinants of Health and Promoting Health Equity

Washington, D.C. (December 5, 2017) — The American Academy of Nursing today released a policy brief urging both institutional and regulatory policies designed at leveraging community benefit activities to address social determinants of health and promote health equity. Specifically, the Academy supports using the most recent nonprofit hospital community benefit requirements under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) to engage stakeholders in assessment, planning and action for community health improvement.

The ACA, and its interpretation in final Internal Revenue Service Rules, require tax-exempt, nonprofit hospitals, to complete a community health and needs assessment and strategic plan every three years. The purpose of these plans is to identify community health needs, and requires the input of local communities and public health departments.

The Academy's policy brief, "Engaging Communities in Creating Health: Leveraging Community Benefit," was published in the September/October 2017 issue of the Academy's journal, *Nursing Outlook*. Read the full policy brief here: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.outlook.2017.08.002>

"The Academy's policy brief on nonprofit hospital's community benefit plan requirements is timely," said Academy President Karen Cox, PhD, RN, FAAN, and Chief Operating Officer at Children's Mercy Kansas City. "These requirements could fundamentally change how nonprofit hospitals see their role in the community, and be a catalyst for them to begin developing new and creative ways to address social determinants of health and work on prevention activities."

The Academy recommends that, when developing their community needs assessments, nonprofit hospitals use this opportunity to engage community partners and public health experts to determine and include the social determinants of health. These may take the form of: the environment; food insecurity; housing; and transportation challenges at the population level. The Academy also supports developing partnerships with various agencies and healthcare organizations on creating, implementing, and measuring the sharing of social determinants data among community and public health systems.

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About the American Academy of Nursing

The American Academy of Nursing (www.AANnet.org) serves the public and the nursing profession by advancing health policy and practice through the generation, synthesis, and dissemination of nursing knowledge. The Academy's more than 2,500 Fellows are nursing's most accomplished leaders in education, management, practice, and research. They have been recognized for their extraordinary contributions to nursing and health care.

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