

Board of Nursing

Mission and philosophy

The Wyoming State Board of Nursing is responsible for the protection of the public's health, welfare, and safety through the regulation of nursing, nursing education, nursing practice, and disciplinary standards. The Board of Nursing's responsibility is to implement a cost-effective and efficient system of regulation, which meets the consumer demand for safe, competent, ethical practitioners of nursing which includes advanced practice nurses, registered professional nurses, licensed practical nurses, and certified nursing assistants.

Major accomplishments and efficiencies

The Board of Nursing regulates the practice and education of the largest numbers and variety of health care practitioners in the state. The board licensed and regulated the practice of 12,897 licensee/certificate holders. This includes 280 advanced practitioners of nursing (APNs), 5503 registered professional nurses (RNs), 1291 licensed practical nurses (LPNs), and 5823 certified nursing assistants (CNAs) in Wyoming as of June 30, 2004. This represents an increase of 1656 licensees (13 percent) since last year. Specifically, this includes an increase of 46 APNs (14 percent), 399 RNs (seven per cent), 218 LPNs (35 percent), and 993 CNAs (17 percent).

The board licensed by endorsement 23 advanced practice nurses, 213 registered professional nurses (of which five were foreign educated nurses), 70 licensed practical nurses and 99 certified nursing assistants; re-licensed 56 registered professional nurses, 15 licensed practical nurses and 40 certified nursing assistants; reactivated the licenses of 29 registered professional nurses and two licensed practical nurses; deemed 35 certified nursing assistants; verified the licenses to other states of 425 registered professional nurses, 63 licensed practical nurses and 138 certified nursing assistants. The board also issued temporary permits to three advanced practice nurses, 295 registered professional nurses, 122 licensed practical nurses, and two certified nursing assistants.

The board examined 280 candidates for registered nurse licensure (87.88 percent overall pass rate; national pass rate: 88.45 percent), 129 candidates for practical nurse licensure (97.62 percent pass rate; national pass rate: 87.75 percent), and 1097 candidates for nursing assistant certification (73.5 percent pass rate). The overall performance of Wyoming candidates on the national licensing examination exceeded the national mean performance of all candidates

General information

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Agency contact

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Year established

1909

Statutory references

WS 33-21-119 thru WS 33-21-156

Authorized personnel

Full-time – Seven

Organizational structure

Governor > Administration and Information > Board of Nursing > Executive Director > Assistant Executive Director > Board of Nursing Staff

Clients served

General public; Registered Nurses (RNs); Advanced Practice Nurses (APNs); Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs); Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs); Nurse Aide Training Programs; Nursing Education Programs; Health Care Facilities

Budget information

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| General Funds | \$ -0- |
| Federal Funds..... | -0- |
| Agency Funds..... | \$656,593.50 |
| Total Funds..... | \$656,593.50 |

Agency to which board reports

Department of Administration & Information

Number of members

Seven

Meeting frequency

At least once every six months; generally four–six times per year

in the United States for practical nursing and was slightly less than the national mean performance for registered professional nurses.

The board enforced the education and training standards for 12 in-state nursing education programs across the state, which includes seven associate degree-nursing programs, four practical nursing programs and one baccalaureate program. There were 218 graduates of registered professional nursing education programs in the state (an increase of 26 graduates or 12 percent since last year) and 104 graduates of practical nursing programs (an increase of 13 graduates or 12.5 percent since last year). The board also granted re-approval for two out-of-state nursing education programs to provide clinical nursing education training in Wyoming.

The board issued 12 advisory opinions, which includes eight addressing registered nursing, two addressing practical nursing, one addressing certified nursing assistants and one addressing nursing education. The Board also revised six previous advisory opinions and repealed 50 opinions, which were no longer current or necessary.

The board monitored the education and training standards for 38 nurse aide-training programs. This includes 13 nurse aide training programs in long term care, six in high schools, 15 in community colleges (includes out reach sites), and three privately contracted programs. The board visited and approved/re-approved 22 nurse aide training programs this past year. Full approval was granted to eight new programs. The board placed twelve programs on inactive status as a result of one or more of the following reasons: a substandard survey by the Office of Health Facilities, no program director/instructor, and /or discontinuance of classes. The board placed eleven programs on warning until deficiencies are removed.

The board processed and conducted investigations on 125 cases against registered professional nurses, licensed practical nurses and certified nursing assistants/nurse aides for violations of the Wyoming Nurse Practice Act and/or the Board Administrative Rules and Regulations. This represents an increase of 32 cases or 25.6 percent since the last reporting period. These cases included 39 complaints, 79 applications for licensure/certification and 7 failures to disclose. Of the disciplinary cases, 38 involved abuse (32 CNA, two LPN, and four RN), 10 involved neglect (three CNA, three LPN and four RN), 36 involved misappropriation of property (30 CNA, three LPN and three RN), 24 involved substance abuse (13 CNA, three LPN and eight RN), and seven involved working without a license (two CNA, two LPN and three RN). The board dismissed seven (7) cases, issued 74 advisory letters, issued three letters of awareness, placed conditions on one license, issued six letters of reprimand, revoked three (3) licenses/certifications, issued six (6) letters of reprimand, approved the licensure/certification of 17 applicants, denied seven applications for licensure/certification and accepted the voluntary surrender of one license. The board conducted seven

administrative contested case hearings.

The Board of Nursing continues to contract with the Wyoming Professional Assistance Program to allow WPAP to serve as the Board's agent for the purpose of monitoring all impaired nurses in the state who enter the program either voluntarily or through order of the board. Currently, there are 30 registered professional nurses in the program, of which three are in reciprocal agreements with other states.

The board has attempted to meet the consumer demand to expedite the licensure/certification process. They entered into a full service agreement with Promissor for nurse aide testing. As a result, nurse aides receive immediate notification as to whether they have passed or failed the examination. In addition, the Board entered into a contract to upgrade the current licensure database. This will allow more flexibility for the Board to track licensee information as well as statistical information necessary for nursing workforce planning.

The board continues to work with the Department of Health, Office of Bioterrorism, to assure adequate nurse volunteers in times of disaster or declared emergencies. The board revised their renewal form to assist in recruitment and renewal of nurse volunteers for the Wyoming Nurse Alert and in response to increasing requests for data related to the nursing workforce. The board also worked with the Office of Health Facilities in the establishment of a feeding assistant program for long-term care.

The board is very concerned about increasing communication to its customers and has expanded their current web site to include information such as minutes from all board meetings, all advisory opinions, and forms. They have also initiated a column in the Wyoming Nurses Association newsletter that is disseminated to all licensed nurses in the state. A customer survey was developed and is distributed to customers of the board by the web site, mail and personal contact. The board hopes to expand its efforts to improve communication to its customers and is in the process of initiating a monthly magazine to be distributed to all its licensees/certificate holders.

Goals and Objectives

GOAL A

Maximize effectiveness in public protection and service.

- ◆ **OBJECTIVE A1:** Remain current on standards and issues related to nursing practice, education, and discipline.
- ◆ **OBJECTIVE A2:** Educate the public regarding the practice and regulation of nursing and nursing education.
- ◆ **OBJECTIVE A3:** Modify and improve outreach and public service efforts to address the increasing diversity and changing needs of the popula-

tion (e.g. aging population, increased diversity of language and culture).

- ◆ **OBJECTIVE A4:** Evaluate effectiveness of all WY Board of Nursing programs through ongoing systematic program evaluation.
- ◆ **OBJECTIVE A5:** Coordinate activities with other governmental agencies to improve public protection and service.

GOAL B

Create an environment that promotes success in order to better serve the public.

- ◆ **OBJECTIVE B1:** Increase communication across all levels.
- ◆ **OBJECTIVE B2: Create an environment that is supportive of productivity and satisfaction.**
- ◆ **OBJECTIVE B3:** Continue to evaluate the organizational structure to ensure that it serves the mission and goals of the Board.
- ◆ **OBJECTIVE B4:** Continually review statutes and update regulations to ensure public protection and prevent unnecessary regulatory burden.

GOAL C

Take a leadership role in structuring 21st century health care related to all levels of nursing, nursing education and nursing practice and disciplinary standards.

- ◆ **OBJECTIVE C1:** Actively participate in shaping health care policy on behalf of consumers of services.
- ◆ **OBJECTIVE C2:** Ensure that nurses are prepared to be competent for their role in a changing health care delivery system.
- ◆ **OBJECTIVE C3:** Educate the public regarding the evolving trends and issues impacting nursing, nursing education, nursing practice and regulations at all levels.

Board of Nursing organization chart

