

Campaign to Increase the Number of Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNSs)

Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNS) are nurses prepared at the masters degree and PhD level who are clinical experts in specialty areas of nursing practice. CNSs are:

- *A vital link in translating new knowledge into nursing practice – bridging the gap between what is known to be effective and what is done in the care of patients;*
- *The glue in facilitating collaboration between health care disciplines in providing quality care to patients; and*
- *One of the primary developers of hospital programs to enhance patient safety..*

An acute shortage of Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNS) threatens the health of the nation, prolongs the duration of illness, and contributes to the occurrence of preventable complications and costs. *Nursing research has demonstrated a relationship between CNS practice and improved patient safety, quality of care, length of hospital stay, and successful recovery. The demand for CNSs is only expected to grow as the health care system intensifies the focus on improving safety and quality outcomes. Additionally, increasing numbers of hospitals are attempting to improve nurse sensitive outcomes and achieve “Magnet” accreditation—a goal that requires the presence of CNSs. Yet the existing CNS workforce, predominately graduates from the 1970s and 1980s, are approaching retirement. This situation must be turned around to meet the challenges of an aging population in an increasingly complex healthcare system.*

In the United States about 200 graduate programs are preparing CNSs. All of the programs need to increase enrollment by at least 50%, but the supply of qualified CNS faculty is declining and the average age of nurse faculty is 55 years with many of them nearing retirement. Our capacity to increase CNS enrollment is directly related to our capacity to increase the numbers of qualified CNS faculty. Further, CNS nursing faculty must represent the nation’s diversity so CNS programs attract, prepare and graduate a more diverse CNS workforce.

The National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists (NACNS) is at the forefront of resolving the CNS shortage. Founded in 1995, NACNS has become the leading national voice advocating for CNSs as part of the solution to our nation’s problems in health care. NACNS has defined CNS practice competencies, recommended core content for graduate curricula, and provided direction for regulatory credentialing of CNSs. Currently, the NACNS serves over 2,000 individual members including CNSs in practice and educator roles. The NACNS is unique in the United States as the only organization promoting the public’s access to the full range of CNS services in improving patient outcomes and cost-effectiveness.

NACNS continues its leadership through the *Clinical Nurse Specialist Foundation (CNSF)*. CNSF supports the educational and scientific purposes of the Association. The top priority for the Foundation for 2006-2008 is to increase the number of nurses entering CNS graduate programs, including PhD programs. Financial incentives to reinforce this initiative include scholarship support, travel monies to attend professional meetings, and mentor-tutoring sessions. Specific CNS Foundation goals in these areas are:

- 1) Promoting awareness of Clinical Nurse Specialist practice and its impact on cost-effective quality patient outcomes to potential CNS students.
- 2) Providing scholarships to CNS students in masters and PhD programs.
- 3) Determining CNS workforce needs by specialty practice, practice setting, and geographic location.

NACNS is creating networks to reach potential CNS students and is working to provide information at national professional meetings; however, funds are needed to rent conference space and generate print and other promotional materials. Travel funds are needed to provide opportunities for potential students to dialogue with CNSs and CNS faculty at key targeted events. .

**You are invited to join the Trustees of the CNS Foundation
in achieving the goal of \$1 Million by 2010.**

The CNS Foundation is seeking contributions from corporations, foundations and individuals who can help increase the number of CNSs to care for patients and the number of qualified CNS nurse faculty to educate CNSs for this and the next generation. We invite everyone committed to excellence in health care to join with the NACNS members and the CNS Foundation Trustees in investing in our *Campaign to Increase the Number of CNSs*. Ultimately, health care innovation is measured by its outcomes – increased survival, improved quality of life and reduced costs to the health system. Participants in the *Campaign to Increase the Number of CNSs* can have a direct impact on these outcomes through their support.

Participation is invited in the following programs:

Scholarship Opportunities

\$250,000 will underwrite scholarships for 10 CNSs seeking PhD preparation and CNS faculty roles. Recipients of these scholarships will teach up to 100 CNSs each year to serve this and future generations

\$200,000 will support an annual CNS scholarship for 10 graduate students at the masters degree level. These scholarships will carry the name(s) of the donor in perpetuity

\$100,000 will support 5 CNS scholarships for graduate students and will carry the name(s) of the donor in perpetuity

\$75,000 will underwrite 5 scholarships for nurse educators to become qualified CNS faculty, who will teach up to 50 CNSs each year to serve this and future generations

\$50,000 will support 2 – 3 CNS scholarships for graduate students and will carry the name(s) of the donor in perpetuity

Other Giving Opportunities

\$25,000-\$50,000 will support an annual CNS clinical or education research project and will carry the name(s) of the donor in perpetuity

CNSF Partner Levels

\$10,000-\$24,999 Diamond CNS Foundation Partner

\$5,000-\$9,999 Gold CNS Foundation Partner

\$1,000-\$4,999 Silver CNS Foundation Partner

\$500-\$999 Bronze CNS Foundation Partner

\$100-\$499 Benefactor

Other \$_____

Gifts of securities, real estate, and personal property will be gratefully accepted.

Please send your contributions to

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