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For Immediate Release

AACN Applauds the National Academy of Sciences' Report Which Supports the Practice Doctorate in Nursing and Calls for More Nurse Scientists

AACN Task Force Releases Draft DNP Essentials and Hosts Regional Meetings

WASHINGTON, DC, September 12, 2005 – The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) applauds a recent report from the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) that calls for nursing to develop a “non-research clinical doctorate” to prepare expert practitioners who can also serve as clinical faculty. This recommendation supports AACN’s position statement adopted in October 2004 which recognizes the practice doctorate as the terminal degree in nursing practice. AACN also supports the recommendations related to doubling the number of nurse scientists and increasing the number of productive research years for nurses prepared in PhD, DNSc and similar doctoral programs.

The NAS report, titled ***Advancing the Nation’s Health Needs: NIH Research Training Programs***, is the 12th in a series of congressionally mandated reports monitoring changing needs for biomedical and behavioral research personnel in the United States. The chapter on nursing focuses on the career trajectory for nurse scientists and includes recommendations for responding to the shortage of nurse investigators. Though focused on preparing researchers, the report states that “the need for doctorally prepared practitioners and clinical faculty would be met if nursing could develop a new non-research clinical doctorate, similar to the MD and PharmD in medicine and dentistry.” The report acknowledges that these programs are already offered at some nursing schools. (See <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/DNP/DNPPProgramList.htm>.)

“The expert panel at the National Academy of Sciences clearly understands the value of the practice doctorate and its role in enhancing the productivity of nurse researchers,” said AACN President Dr. Jean E. Bartels. “Doctorally-prepared nurse clinicians are needed to fully implement the emerging science and practice innovations developed by nurse investigators.” In

its *Position Statement on the Practice Doctorate in Nursing*, AACN recommends moving the current level of preparation necessary for advanced nursing practice roles from the master's degree to the doctorate level by the year 2015. Read more about the movement toward the practice doctorate in nursing on the Web at <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/DNP>.

AACN also applauds the NAS report's recommendations related to enhancing the nursing research workforce, including creating a new institutional research training grant (T32) focused on rapid progression into nursing research careers, fast-tracking baccalaureate students into doctoral programs, and expanding the interdisciplinary scope of research-focused programs. This report was supported by a grant between the National Academy of Sciences and the National Institutes of Health, Department of Health and Human Services. Additional support was provided by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. To purchase a report or to read it online, see <http://www.nap.edu/catalog/11275.html>.

Draft DNP Program *Essentials* Released and Regional Meetings Planned

As part of AACN's work to support the development of Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) programs, a draft version of the *DNP Essentials* was released for public review and comment on August 18, 2005. Prepared by AACN's Task Force on the Essentials of Nursing Education for the Doctor of Nursing Practice, this document is the first stage in the development of curricular expectations that will guide and shape DNP education. This document is available online at <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/DNP/pdf/Essentials.pdf>.

AACN invites practicing nurses, faculty, employers, graduate students and other stakeholders to learn more about the national movement toward the DNP and discuss the draft *DNP Essentials* at a series of regional meetings held September 2005 through January 2006. Representatives from AACN's DNP task forces will share details about their work and provide forums for attendees to give feedback and discuss related issues. The following conferences are scheduled:

- September 14-15, Simmons College, Boston, MA
- September 29-30, Saint Louis University, St. Louis, MO
- November 3-4, Emory University, Atlanta, GA
- December 8-9, University of Texas Health Science Center, Houston, TX
- January 12-13, University of San Diego, San Diego, CA

For more information about these regional meetings including an application to register, see <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/DNP/RegConf.htm>.

*The **American Association of Colleges of Nursing** is the national voice for university and four-year-college education programs in nursing. Representing more than 585 member schools of nursing at public and private institutions nationwide, AACN's educational, research, governmental advocacy, data collection, publications, and other programs work to establish quality standards for bachelor's- and graduate-degree nursing education, assist deans and directors to implement those standards, influence the nursing profession to improve health care, and promote public support of baccalaureate and graduate nursing education, research, and practice. Web site: <http://www.aacn.nche.edu>*

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