



ALABAMA BOARD OF NURSING

INSIGHTS

ABN SEEKS LEGISLATION TO ENACT THE eNLC

In September 2018, following a very intense, detailed analysis, the Alabama Board of Nursing (ABN) formally decided to pursue participation in the Enhanced Nurse Licensure Compact (eNLC). This was not an easy decision, as the Board was careful to pay special attention to protecting Alabama's regulatory prerogatives and to ensure that Compact participation would not negatively impact patient care in the state.

As we have discussed previously, entering the eNLC requires changes to the Alabama Nurse Practice Act. The Board is honored to recognize Representative April Weaver, RN (R-Alabaster) and Senator Greg Reed (R-Jasper) for sponsoring the historic bills (House Bill 44 and Senate Bill 38) that would enact the Compact in Alabama.

Membership in the eNLC will enable nurses with Multistate (eNLC) Licenses to work in Alabama, without separate Alabama licenses. Likewise, Alabama nurses who have Multistate Licenses issued by the ABN would be able to practice in any Compact state. The ABN believes this will help alleviate the current nursing shortage, especially in rural areas, and reduce regulatory barriers in Alabama.

When the eNLC bill takes effect, each Alabama nurse will have the option to retain his or her single state license with no change, or to apply for an eNLC Multistate License. The choice of licensure type will be entirely the prerogative of the Alabama nurse. Any additional costs associated with Multistate Licenses would be borne solely by those nurses who apply for that license type.

When the bill passes, rules and regulations will be developed to implement the law. The eNLC rule-making process will take several months and must be completed prior to issuing the first Multistate License. As with any other rule-making process, licensees and the public will be given the opportunity to comment on proposed regulations, prior to implementation.

Needless to say, this is a big change, both for Alabama nurses and for the Board. Working together, we will continue to move health care forward, for all Alabamians.

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ALABAMA BOARD OF NURSING

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Reminder to Nurses: Check Your Contact Information on My Profile

Over the past several years, the Board has taken a proactive stance toward communicating with licensees, to ensure that everyone is aware of new developments and concerns in nursing legislation. Our primary means of achieving this goal is through email, to the address provided by each nurse.

Unfortunately, we continue to receive feedback from licensees who missed important updates, reminders, and requests, because they had failed to update their contact information on file with the Board. Please take a moment to visit [My Profile](#) on the ABN website, and ensure that all information in your file is correct. Your assistance is greatly appreciated, as we strive to improve communication with Alabama nurses.

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ABN Continues to Eliminate Regulatory Barriers with Rules Effective March 8

At the January 2019 Board meeting, the ABN approved a number of changes to the ABN Administrative Code. Each of the changes is intended to further the Board's goal of eliminating barriers to practice and expanding access to nursing care for Alabama patients. These rule changes, all of which received uniformly positive responses from licensees, take effect on March 8. A summary of the changes follows:

Extending the Earning Period for Continuing Education (CE) - For years, nurses have been frustrated by rules that require them to wait until January 1 of each Renewal cycle to begin earning CE credit for the next Renewal.

Recognizing that this rule discourages nurses from pursuing valuable education to enhance and improve patient care in the state, the Board decided to amend the Chapter 4 of the ABN Administrative Code, to allow a nurse to begin earning CE hours immediately following Renewal of his or her license, regardless of whether the licensee elects to renew on September 1 or December 31. This new rule is consistent with the Board's continuing effort to encourage nurses to seek professional development as often as possible.

Allowing Standardized Procedure Approval to Follow Qualified Nurses Between Facilities - The current rules governing approval of nursing practice beyond basic education, known as Standardized Procedures (SP) (ABN Administrative Code §610-X-6-.12), tie approval of each SP to nurses in a particular facility that holds an approval for that procedure. The Board understands that nurses often hold jobs in multiple facilities, and that repeating the required training for each SP is redundant and unnecessary. Going forward, the rules will acknowledge the training a nurse already receives in one facility and allow him or her to perform the SP in any subsequent facility that has a valid approval for that procedure. Naturally, each facility must continue to maintain documented competency validation for each nurse performing a Standardized Procedure in that facility.

Eliminating Restrictions on LPN Scope of Practice - Over the past few years, the Board has convened a number of Advisory Councils, to explore avenues to expand nursing scope of practice, always ensuring that patient care in Alabama maintains a high standard. The work of the Advisory Councils has contributed to a number of policy changes made by the Board, most recently a recommendation from the Nursing Leadership Advisory Council to expand allowable scope for Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs). Effective March 8, 2019, LPNs working in facilities that maintain appropriate documentation will be allowed to administer blood and blood components under an approved SP for LPNs and to conduct discharge assessments, in accordance with facility policies and procedures.

We believe that the above changes positively impact the quality of patient care in Alabama, but our efforts are ongoing. The Board encourages all licensees to monitor communications from the ABN through email, social media, and our newsletters, to stay abreast of further advances in nursing care in Alabama.

eNLC (continued)

If you would like to share your views on the proposed eNLC bills, you may do so by visiting <http://capwiz.com/state-al/home/> and following these instructions:

1 – At the link, enter your street address and select the "Go" button.

2 – On the right side of the screen, the names of your State Senator and State Representative will appear below the name of Governor Ivey. Choose either the Senator or Representative.

3 – On the legislator's page, there is a tab labeled "Contact." Select this tab and click the link to contact the legislator by email.

4 – Fill out the form, including your message, and select "Send Message."

5 – Repeat the process for your other state legislator, if you wish.



Governor Ivey Reappoints Three ABN Members

We are pleased to announce that Governor Kay Ivey has reappointed the following three outstanding Members to the Alabama Board of Nursing:



Vicki M. Hill, MSN, RN

A graduate of Auburn University with a BSN from the University of Alabama – Birmingham and an MSN from Samford University, Vicki M. Hill has more than 20 years of experience in professional nursing in Alabama. Ms. Hill has extensive experience working in Neonatal Intensive Care Units (NICUs) and as a professional educator. Ms. Hill presently is Executive Nursing Director of Cardiac and Medical Services with Princeton Baptist Medical Center. She serves in Nursing Practice position on the Board, and currently is the Board Secretary.



Natalie Baker, DNP, CRNP, FAANP

Dr. Baker has been a nurse practitioner for 25 years. Her area of interest is caring for frail older adults in long term care settings. Dr. Baker is actively involved in local and national organizations, promoting evidence-based initiatives for this patient population. She is actively involved with the Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association, serving as the Chair of the Education Committee. She has published in peer-reviewed journals and presented at national nursing conferences. Dr. Baker is the Coordinator of the Adult/Gerontology Primary Nurse Practitioner specialty track at the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Nursing and maintains a clinical practice at a long term care facility. She serves in an Advanced Practice position on the Board.



Peggie Carpenter, BA, LPN

A graduate of Stillman College with a diploma in Practical Nursing from Shelton State College, Ms. Carpenter has been a nurse for more than 31 years. She has two adult daughters and one granddaughter. A resident of Tuscaloosa, Alabama, Ms. Carpenter is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority and Weeping Mary Baptist Church. She serves in a AFLPN position on the Board.

Board Members are appointed by the Governor to serve four-year terms. By the close of 2019, the Governor will be appointing members to fill two Nursing Education positions and one AFLPN position.

ABN STAFF AVAILABLE TO SHARE INFORMATION REGARDING VDAP

The Voluntary Disciplinary Alternative Program (VDAP) promotes early identification, intervention, treatment, and rehabilitation of any nurse or applicant issued a valid temporary permit for licensure. VDAP is intended for an individual whose competence is found to be impaired or compromised because of the use or abuse of drugs, alcohol, controlled substances, chemicals, or other substances or as a result of a physical or mental condition rendering the person unable to meet the standards of the nursing profession. Since its inception, VDAP has assisted hundreds of professionals in Alabama to overcome their problems and return to safe and competent practice.

Programs like VDAP have taken on particular importance, in light of our nation's ongoing opioid crisis. Over the past several months, the ABN has been conducting a focused campaign to raise awareness and encourage participation in VDAP, and the results have been outstanding. However, we can always do more to help nurses in need and, above all, the patients they serve.

As we seek to spread the word and encourage every nurse to seek the help that he or she needs to continue providing patient care, VDAP staff are making themselves available to address facility staff, students and faculty of nursing education programs, and professional or civic associations. If you feel that this opportunity may be of benefit to your organization, please visit www.abn.alabama.gov and complete a [Speaker Request Form](#).

Further information regarding VDAP, including eligibility criteria and enrollment information, is available on our [VDAP page](#).



**Voluntary
Disciplinary
Alternative
Program**