POSITIONING NURSES IN THE COVID-19 CRISIS: A COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY
Every day in the media we see nurses leading the charge to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. Hospitals across the nation are recruiting heavily for nurses during this pandemic because of their expertise, specifically in dealing with crisis areas like the ICU and Emergency Department.

This is a window of opportunity to develop a focused campaign to position nurses in the media and to policy makers.
PERCENT OF NURSES RECOGNIZED AS HEALTH CARE EXPERTS IN THE MEDIA

Includes some of the states hit hardest by COVID-19: New York, New Jersey, California

State NP Practice Authority

- 22*
- 14
- 14

Full After Physician Oversight Limited

Nursing schools leading the charge for change

- CASE WESTERN UNIVERSITY
- COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
- DUKE UNIVERSITY
- EMORY UNIVERSITY
- JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY
- NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
- UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER
- VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY
- YALE UNIVERSITY
KEY MESSAGES

Three key messages have been identified as crucial focuses for this campaign.

HEALTH CARE WORKFORCE
Nursing is the nation’s largest health care profession and the primary providers of hospital and long-term care.

EXPERTS IN HEALTH CARE
Nurses are experts in health care and should be aptly represented in interprofessional care and in the media.

PRACTICE AUTHORITY
Nurse Practitioners should be able to practice at the highest level and to the top of their license.

#NursingFrontline #NursesKnowBest #NursesLead
MEDIA
Op-eds and media pitches featuring expert nurses

SOCIAL MEDIA
Tweets, blogs, hashtags, Instagram

LETTERS TO STATE REPRESENTATIVES
Crisis shows the necessity of full practice authority

SPEAK UP!
Be your own advocate to make change realtime.

#ItCantWait
SPREADING THE MESSAGE

Templates to get you started

#ItCantWait
CAMPAIGN HASHTAGS

Main

#ItCantWait

Complementary

#RaiseTheLine

#NursingFrontline

#NursesKnowBest

#NursesLead
#ITCANTWAIT

#ItCantWait-- Empower nurses now with full practice authority. We must strengthen the healthcare workforce and enable nurses to practice at the top of their preparation. #RaiseTheLine #NursesLead

WORKFORCE

Nurses are the front lines of healthcare. They are the largest portion of the healthcare workforce, providing up to 80% of hands-on care worldwide. #ItCantWait #RaiseTheLine #NursingFrontline

EXPERTISE

80% of the healthcare workforce are nurses--from CNA or LPN licensure (and certified to care) to DNP or PhD doctoral degrees (and world-renowned for research). Ask a nurse, we know the answer. #ItCantWait #RaiseTheLine #NursesKnowBest

#ITCANTWAIT

#ItCantWait-- Empower nurses now in states hit hardest by #COVID19: New York, California, Louisiana & New Jersey. We must strengthen the healthcare workforce. #RaiseTheLine #NursesLead

WORKFORCE

Healthcare doesn’t work without critical, hands-on, direct patient care. That comes from nurses, who provide 80% of healthcare worldwide. #ItCantWait #RaiseTheLine #NursingFrontline

EXPERTISE

Nurses are built with heart and grit -- and grounded with knowledge of science, technology, engineering, & math. #ItCantWait represent nurses now in the media and in interprofessional leadership. #RaiseTheLine #NursesKnowBest
As the coronavirus pandemic has clearly demonstrated, nurses provide the bulk of care and assume the brunt of the danger that comes with stemming a worldwide health crisis. It’s times like these that show the overwhelming evidence of why nurses are the world’s most trusted profession, why they should be able to practice to the top of their license, and why they must be recognized as experts within the media.

Nursing Majority—nurses make up nearly half of the world’s health care workforce and provide up to 80 percent of hands-on care. They are the most trusted profession because they provide competent and compassionate care to patients no matter the circumstances, even if they are dire or dangerous. They are the backbone of a health care system that would not function without their critical, hands-on, direct patient interaction.

Media Experts—now more than ever, nurses should be used by the media as expert interviewees to help the general public understand the current pandemic and what it means for their own health. Nurses are experts in their field because they have knowledge and experience that is evidence-based through research and centered on frontline patient interaction.

Top Practitioners—nurses need full practice authority in order to perform at the top of their license without physician oversight. By legislating this legal authority, nurse practitioners can evaluate patients, diagnose, order, and interpret diagnostic tests, and initiate and manage treatments, including prescribing medications and controlled substances. Every provider should be utilized to their full scope and capability, including nurses.
This uncharted time of COVID-19 has been a test on all of us. But nurses especially, have taken the hit—and the lead—in testing patients and treating those affected by the virus. It’s long overdue that we open our eyes to the facts that define the profession of nursing and are imperative to getting us to the other side of this pandemic. Nursing, as one of the most crucial assets during a crisis, needs to be recognized for its force, its education, expertise, and ability to deliver high-quality care.

Nurses are the largest sector of the health care workforce and provide up to 80 percent of hands-on care. The global pandemic we are in now has revealed that nurses are the backbone of our health care system that would not function without their critical, hands-on, direct patient interaction. Nurses diagnose, treat, and manage patients throughout the spectrum of disease, and they have the education and experience to make informed, evidence-based decisions. During COVID-19, they are relentlessly working with limited or makeshift personal protective equipment and providing necessary care to those whose health demands it while the rest of the world social distances. It’s scary to think where we would be, if in COVID-19, 80 percent of our health care workforce didn’t exist.

Nurses are experts in care and should be recognized by the media. Particularly now during this raging pandemic, nurses should be recognized and interviewed by the media as the frontline workers who have a significant voice to add to the conversation. The general public needs to know the first-hand accounts of the nurses who are risking their lives and exactly the types of conditions that some of the sickest patients find themselves in.

Even beyond COVID-19, nurses must have a voice that is represented for its vast knowledge and experience. A multitude of nurses today have master’s and doctoral degrees that give them the skills to conduct research, mine data, analyze trends, and develop the steps to implement their findings into practice. Their education is grounded in the disciplines of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. The public needs to hear from nurses because they are experts in health care, they have an eye on all sides of the problem, and are the closest clinicians to the patients.

Nurse practitioners need “full practice authority.”

Full practice authority is legislation that allows nurse practitioners to practice without physician oversight. By lifting oversight restrictions, nurse practitioners can evaluate patients, diagnose, order, and interpret diagnostic tests, and initiate and manage treatments, including prescribing medications and controlled substances, under the exclusive license authority of the state board of nursing. It allows nurse practitioners to practice to the top of their license, and especially during times of crisis, grants the greatest amount of access to care for the most people.

While the unfortunate circumstances of COVID-19 have brought to light the importance and necessity of nurses and nurse practitioners, it is imperative to recognize that for 50 years, nurse practitioners have provided primary and specialty care to patients across the lifespan.

Many states already have full practice authority for nurse practitioners, and some have temporarily lifted practice restrictions in light of the pandemic, but for the states who do not, we urge you to see the groundwork that is being laid by giving NPs this deserved opportunity. During COVID-19, but also beyond, we need all hands on deck with all clinicians having the ability to use their education and experience to the fullest extent.
The Honorable [Name]
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator [Name],

On behalf of the [insert school name] and as a representative of the nursing profession, I urge you to consider legislating "Full Practice Authority" for nurse practitioners in [insert state]. Through this authority, all nurse practitioners would be able to evaluate patients, diagnose, order, and interpret diagnostic tests, and initiate and manage treatments, including prescribing medications and controlled substances, under the exclusive license authority of the state board of nursing.

[Specify your state’s current restrictions and what it would mean to have those restrictions lifted.]

While the unfortunate circumstances of COVID-19 have brought to light the importance and necessity of nurses and nurse practitioners, it is imperative to recognize that for 50 years, nurse practitioners have provided primary and specialty care to patients across the lifespan. Through their advanced preparation and education, they are trained to provide critical, hands-on, direct patient care. Lifting further oversight requirements would allow them to freely perform at the top of their preparation.

As specified by the American Association of Nurse Practitioners, the benefits of full practice authority include:
- Increased access to care, particularly among underserved populations and within rural areas where access to physicians may be inadequate.
- Streamlined and more efficient delivery of care where patients can receive full and direct access to services at the point of care.
- Decreased cost by avoiding duplication of services and billing and unnecessary repetition of office visits and orders.
- Protected patient choice that allows patients to see health care providers of their choosing, thereby leading to more person-centered care.

Especially during this difficult time for our nation and world, thank you for your consideration of this important issue.