Promoting the value and cost-effectiveness of nursing

ICN Position:

Evidence shows that nursing is a cost effective yet often undervalued and underutilized health care resource.

Nurses must clearly articulate and demonstrate the value and cost-effectiveness of nursing and nursing outcomes to consumers, other health providers and policy-makers at all levels. They must also be able to negotiate and advocate for the resources needed to provide safe care.

Nurses have a responsibility to engage in research and develop innovative models of care delivery that will contribute evidence of nursing effectiveness to planning, management and policy development.

Nursing education, especially management and leadership development programmes, must help nurses become skilled and articulate in demonstrating the value and cost effectiveness of nursing to the health services. Nursing education institutions, and where relevant nursing regulatory bodies, should regularly review curricula to ensure the inclusion of content related to the value and cost effectiveness of nursing.

National nurses associations (NNAs) have an important role in helping determine and influence health and public policy that promotes cost effectiveness and quality of care.

National nurses associations must develop strategies to actively promote the participation of nursing in health service decision-making, nursing and health research, and health and public policy development. This requires developing and supporting strategies for the preparation of nurse leaders who are skilled and articulate, and able to demonstrate as well as promote the value and cost effectiveness of nursing to the health services.

Nurses must assert their professional involvement in policy formulation at all levels.

With rising health needs and health care costs, which includes costs associated with the provision of nursing services, nurses must take the initiative in defining, examining and evaluating the health outcomes and costs of their activities.

Nurses, especially nurse leaders, must have a good understanding of the purpose and nature of health care reform, and the contribution nursing can make at all levels of health care delivery, and in planning, management and policy development for health care services. Where health care reform is in its planning stages, nurse leaders must play a leadership role in policy development related to the appropriateness, nature and purpose of health reform.
The International Council of Nurses (ICN) and member associations can assist nursing to develop the capacity for dealing with cost-effectiveness in health care, by:

- Promoting the role of nursing as a core resource in cost-effective care and as a critical contributor to decision making on healthcare spending.
- Offering nurses educational opportunities to gain knowledge of political skills, economic principles, budgeting and resource use and cost-effectiveness in health.
- Supporting leadership and management development that includes the role of nurses in resource management, decision-making and policy development.
- Promoting and supporting research and evaluation that links and validates costing methodologies to nursing and health outcomes.
- Encouraging the development of database systems that permit comparison of outcomes across settings to best approaches to care and the most effective design of nursing systems.
- Facilitating information dissemination and interactive networking on cost-effectiveness research, cost-saving strategies and best practice standards.
- Establishing professional networks with relevant stakeholders, to foster collegial collaboration and exchange of ideas and information aimed at promoting quality and cost effectiveness.
- Promoting equity in terms and conditions of service for nurses, to recognize and support their role in promoting cost effectiveness and quality of care in multi-disciplinary settings.

*Adopted in 1995
Reviewed and reaffirmed in 2001*
The International Council of Nurses is a federation of more than 130 national nurses associations representing the millions of nurses worldwide. Operated by nurses and leading nursing internationally, ICN works to ensure quality nursing care for all and sound health policies globally.

### Related ICN Positions:
- Scope of nursing practice
- Participation of nurses in health services decision-making and policy development
- Publicly funded accessible health services

### ICN Publications:
- **Cost-Effectiveness in Health Care Services**, Guidelines for National Nurses’ Associations and others, Geneva, ICN, 1993