

Nursing Advocacy: Purpose, Power, and Pathways for Action

Every Nurse Can Advocate—At The Bedside And Beyond

Why Advocacy Matters in Nursing

Advocacy is a core professional responsibility: it protects patients, families, and communities, and shapes the systems that care for them. For pediatric hematology/oncology nurses, it protects the most vulnerable children through some of medicine's most complex, urgent challenges.

Protects
Patient rights
& safety

Amplifies
Patient & family
voice

Improves
Health
outcomes

Strengthens
The nursing
profession

Influences
Systems &
legislation

Advocate at Every Level



LEVEL 1: BEDSIDE Institution

Every shift is a chance to advocate

Examples:

- Attend patient rounds
- Provide nursing input on policies
- Escalate safety & quality concerns
- Serve on ethics, QI, or shared governance committees
- Lead initiatives on survivorship or care coordination



LEVEL 2: COMMUNITY Local

Connect families to the world beyond the hospital

Examples:

- Partner with schools on reintegration plans
- Connect families to housing, food, and transportation resources
- Volunteer & speak at community health events



LEVEL 3: STATE HOUSE State

Shape the laws that shape your practice

Examples:

- Join your state nursing association.
- Attend nurse legislation days
- Give public comment or testimony on bills
- Sign on to letters through your nursing organizations



LEVEL 4: CAPITOL HILL Federal

Bring bedside evidence to national policy

Examples:

- Contact your US Representatives or senators.
- Sharing stories that highlight gaps in access, equity, or coverage.
- Sign onto letters that support key legislation or funding.
- Participating in federal advocacy days (virtual or in-person)
- Support key pediatric legislation

Advocacy is not an optional skill — it is a professional obligation grounded in nursing ethics, licensure standards, and the trust society places in nurses.

Get Involved

Ways to Start Today, at Every Level

START NOW

- ☐ Join a professional organization's advocacy committee
- ☐ Sign up for legislative alerts
- ☐ Attend an advocacy townhall
- ☐ Attend a local or state advocacy day
- ☐ Share patient-centered stories with policymakers
- ☐ Serve on a hospital committee
- ☐ Write for a newsletter or publication
- ☐ Volunteer with a community organization

BUILD YOUR SKILLS

- ☐ Take an advocacy or health policy course
- ☐ Attend webinars or workshops
- ☐ Partner with an experienced advocate
- ☐ Practice framing issues with data & patient stories
- ☐ Mentor newer nurses in advocacy

Know The Legislation

Give Kids a Chance Act | Sickle Cell Disease Comprehensive Care Act
Accelerating Kids' Access to Care Act | Title VII Nursing Workforce Development Programs

Resources & Support

PROFESSIONAL ORGS

- APHON
- ONS
- ANA advocacy committees & toolkits

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORTS

- Shared governance
- Ethics & QI committees
- Mentorship

EXTERNAL SUPPORTS

- Legislative action centers
- Community partnerships
- APHON's coalition partners

When nurses advocate, systems improve, families feel supported, and children receive safer, more equitable care.

Advocacy is not separate from nursing—it is the heart of nursing.

For more information on APHON's Advocacy initiatives, go to:
www.aphon.org/about-us/advocacy-health-policy