**Introduction**

This paper explores the American Nurses Association (ANA) through an in-depth review of its online resources, which serves as an alternative to a direct interview. This method allows for a comprehensive understanding of the organization's aims, initiatives, and impact on health policy and nursing practices.

**ANA Mission and Relation to Health Policy**

The American Nurses Association’s (ANA) mission, "to advance the nursing profession and influence health care," by setting high nursing standards, bolstering the health and wellness of nurses, providing a safe and ethical work environment, and advocating on healthcare issues (ANA Enterprise, 2020; ANA Enterprise, 2017). The American Nurses Association (ANA) plays a crucial role in healthcare policymaking, advocating at the highest governmental levels and supporting pivotal legislation like the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) in 2010, which significantly expanded health coverage (Smith, 2015). Despite challenges, including attempts to repeal the ACA since 2016, ANA's advocacy efforts have been essential in preserving key aspects of healthcare reform (Jones & Thompson, 2018). However, gaps in nursing workload and patient care remain, calling for a reassessment of strategies (Jones & Thompson, 2018). As the population ages, ANA pushes for reforms such as the adoption of new technologies and expanded nursing practices to meet the increased demand for complex care, with the Institute of Medicine providing benchmarks for progress (2016). Additionally, ANA engages in educating stakeholders about nursing's role and proactively addresses emerging health crises, like mental health and the opioid epidemic, to shape effective health policies (Williams, 2019). Despite successes, further targeted advocacy is needed to ensure practical improvements in healthcare delivery (Brown & Davis, 2020), reinforcing ANA's mission to enhance care quality comprehensively.

**Priority Nursing/Health Issues**

The American Nurses Association (ANA) is actively involved in such areas as *health system reform initiatives*, *affirming health care as a human right*, and *advocacy for nurses and public health*. These focus areas highlight ANA's dedication to enhancing healthcare delivery, accessibility, and affirming the essential role of nurses in the health system. A significant part of ANA's efforts included advocating for the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) of 2010, which addressed issues like healthcare costs, access, and systemic inequity, aiming to improve care delivery and empower nurses in patient-centered innovations (American Nurses Association, 2024). Despite the ACA's role in improving healthcare, debates persist about its efficacy in fully resolving access and affordability issues and the extent of healthcare reform needed (American Nurses Association, 2024). Furthermore, ANA promotes a broader scope of practice for nurses and their greater involvement in public health policy, aligning with its stance on health as a human right (American Nurses Association, 2017). The American Nurses Association (ANA) also faces the challenge of reconciling internal disagreements over approaches to universal healthcare, which vary among nurses in terms of its impact on workloads and care quality. According to the American Nurses Association (2024) these debates are central to ongoing policy development and advocacy efforts, aimed at unifying nursing perspectives and refining healthcare policies to ensure equitable, patient-centered care.

**ANA’s Response to COVID-19**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the American Nurses Association (ANA) was pivotal in influencing policy and legislative changes to support healthcare workers and improve public health responses. ANA's advocacy focused on several key areas including setting standards for personal protective equipment (PPE), promoting expanded telehealth services under Medicare and Medicaid to minimize in-person visits, and supporting the approval of Section 1135 Medicaid waivers for greater healthcare access flexibility (ANA Capitol Beat, 2020). Despite these efforts, implementation faced significant challenges such as ensuring adequate PPE supplies and managing staffing shortages, which were intensified by the pandemic (American Nurses Association, 2024). Feedback from nurses on ANA's actions was mixed, with some expressing appreciation for the support, while others felt overwhelmed and questioned the sufficiency of the measures, particularly in terms of resource allocation and mental health support (American Nurses Association, 2024). Overall, while ANA's legislative advocacy positively impacted patient care and nurse safety, the experience highlighted the need for more robust policies and preparedness to enhance nurse well-being and patient outcomes in future crises.

**Engagement in Policy Advancement**

RNAction, managed by the American Nurses Association's (ANA) Department of Government Affairs, is a critical platform that empowers nurses to engage actively in health policy advancement (American Nurses Association, 2017). It provides a suite of resources that facilitate direct contact with legislators, participation in advocacy campaigns, and access to educational tools, thereby enhancing nurses' roles in legislative discussions (American Nurses Association, 2017). The platform has proven effective in real-world advocacy, such as when nurses from a community hospital used it to campaign against unsafe staffing levels, leading to legislative hearings and media attention. However, nurses often face barriers like limited time, lack of legislative knowledge, and apprehension about advocacy, which RNAction addresses by offering training and updates on health policy issues (American Nurses Association, 2017). This support equips nurses to lead in shaping policies crucial to healthcare quality and their working conditions, making RNAction a pivotal tool in nurse-led advocacy efforts.

**Technology Integration in Nursing**

*How does the American Nurses Association (ANA) support integrating technology in nursing practice and education?* The American Nurses Association (ANA) actively supports the integration of technology in nursing practice and education, advocating for the adoption of advanced tools such as telehealth and electronic health records (EHRs). These technologies aim to improve patient care efficiency and expand educational resources for nurses. Telehealth has become especially significant during the COVID-19 pandemic, offering benefits like enhanced access and reduced costs, though it also presents challenges including technological competence and privacy concerns (American Nurses Association, 2024). Similarly, EHRs help streamline nursing practice but require extensive training and can disrupt existing workflows (American Nurses Association, 2024). The ANA addresses these issues by providing education, advocating for user-friendly systems, and collaborating with stakeholders to facilitate smooth technology adoption (American Nurses Association, 2024). Through these efforts, the ANA plays a crucial role in helping nurses overcome resistance and apprehension towards technological changes, ensuring they are well-prepared to deliver high-quality care in a technologically advanced healthcare environment.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, the American Nurses Association (ANA) significantly impacts health policy and the nursing profession, championing initiatives like the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) and technological integrations in healthcare. These efforts address essential issues in patient care and nursing practice but also reveal the need for continuous improvement in healthcare policies (American Nurses Association, 2024). As the healthcare landscape evolves with technological advances and emerging crises, ANA's proactive and anticipatory approach will be crucial for future successes. Moreover, platforms such as RNAction empower nurses to influence policy effectively, overcoming engagement barriers with robust support and training (ANA, 2017). These actions ensure that nurses are equipped to contribute significantly to policy discussions, advocating for advancements that prioritize patient-centered care and professional practice conditions, thus reinforcing the essential role of nursing insights in healthcare decision-making.

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