

2013 WNA Reference Proposal #1

Subject: Nurse's Role and Capacity in Addressing Obesity in Wisconsin.
Submitted by: WNA Board of Directors
WNA Core Issues: Workplace Health, Rights & Safety, Appropriate Staffing/Nurse Shortage, Continued Competencies, Patient Safety/Advocacy

Summary:

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) one in four Americans is obese. For Wisconsin, the most recent rates indicate 27% of Wisconsinites are considered obese.

The CDC reports that for adults, overweight and obesity ranges are determined by using weight and height to calculate a number called the Body Mass Index (BMI). "BMI is used because, for most people, it correlates with their amount of body fat." (CDC, 2013) The CDC reports an adult who has a BMI between 25 and 29.9 is considered overweight and an adult who has a BMI of 30 or higher is considered obese. The National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute report that obesity and overweight substantially increase the risk of morbidity from hypertension, dyslipidemia, type 2 diabetes, coronary heart disease, stroke; gallbladder disease, osteoarthritis; sleep apnea and respiratory problems; and endometrial breast, prostate, and colon cancers. Higher body weights are also associated with increase in all-caused mortality. (National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, 2013)

An August 2013 report, "Progress on Childhood Obesity" (CDC Vital Signs, 2013), reported that 12% of the US population of preschoolers is obese, which is a slight improvement except for low-income preschoolers. The report indicated that Wisconsin's obesity rates for low-income preschoolers climbed slightly from 13.6% in 2008 to 14% in 2011. The concern regarding obese children is that they are five times as likely as their normal-weight counterparts to be overweight or obese as adults. A child's weight status is determined using an age-and-sex specific percentile for BMI. Existing health risks for overweight and obese children include high blood pressure and high cholesterol; impaired glucose tolerance, insulin resistance and type 2 diabetes; breathing problems, such as sleep apnea and asthma, joint problems and musculoskeletal discomfort and throughout childhood and adolescence there are greater risks for psychological problems such as discrimination and poor self-esteem. The health care costs related to treatments of adult obesity-related conditions has been estimated at \$147 billion a year or nearly 10% of all annual medical spending using 2006 data. Obese individuals spend 42% more on healthcare costs than their healthy-weight counterparts. For children with obesity rates, \$14.1 billion is spent in direct care costs. There is also the impact of occupational health and safety costs due to handling/moving obese patients.

Nurses are not immune from developing conditions of overweight and obesity. The reasons cited include stressors related to workload, leadership/management, professional conflict, emotional labor and low job influence. (Journal of Psychosocial Oncology, 1992) In a more recent study, 1,700 female nurses were studied to determine the factors associated with

obesity in nurses. They used pre-established criteria for their study which were: working long hours, working “on-call”, working overtime, having a high work burden and/or lack of rest. The two groups that were studied were “favorable work schedules” and “non-favorable”, as described above. Fifty five (55) percent of the nurses in both groups were either overweight or obese. The reasons for obesity were different, but the need to promote the practice of healthy behaviors among this nursing workforce was recommended. (Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, 54 (8), 2012)

The American Nurses Association has developed a program called “Healthy Nurse”. The program supports all aspects of health and wellness for nurses. A portion of the program includes “Healthy Weight” with the emphasis on “maintaining your health, feeling good about yourself, and having more energy to enjoy your life” (ANA, 2013, World Wide Web). The website section provides a variety of resources that assist the nurse in making healthy choices.

Recommendations: that the Wisconsin Nurses Association

1. Create a Task Force of interested WNA members, appointed by the WNA Board of Directors to :
 - A. Identify key Wisconsin stakeholders that WNA should partner with to reduce the obesity epidemic among Wisconsin adults and children.
 - B. Recommend a strategy for addressing the obesity rates among Wisconsin’s RNs.
2. Report progress at the 2014 WNA Annual Meeting and Convention.

Goals:

Assure that the RN is an essential provider in all practice settings through research, education, workplace advocacy, legislation and regulation.

Implementation Strategy

Topic	Activities	Cost Estimation
1. Task Force Meetings	1. Develop objectives, strategies and deliverables.	One face-to-face meeting – 12 participants (travel and meal) = \$500.00 Conference Calls 8 at \$30.00/call = \$240.00
2. Implementation of Work Products	Conduct and analyze survey, conference attendance, rapid response call	\$300.00
3. Develop report and recommendations	Create report, webinar, formal presentation	\$250.00
Total		\$1,290.00

