



## President's Message

# Mindfulness and the work of the academy



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Mindfulness has become an important concept to help ensure the safety and high reliability of the clinical practice of healthcare professionals. Mindfulness based interventions have been used successfully to decrease stress and burnout in nurses and physicians. The Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) describes mindfulness as assuming an aware, non-judgmental, present state of mind. It is the habit or practice of being in the moment.

Why is mindfulness important to the work of the American Academy of Nursing? Our mission is evaluating and then advocating policy based on evidence-based practices that positively impact the health of the population. The world in which we find ourselves is anything but mindful. Most things are reduced to instant messages, tweets and "likes." The 24/7 news cycle can be completely overwhelming, sometimes maddening, and frequently exhausting. The tremendous desire for the Academy to respond to the many distractions can cause us to use our limited resources inappropriately and take our eyes off our mission, strategic goals, and objectives. Yes, there are times when something is so concerning or egregious that we must respond and make our voices heard immediately and unequivocally. The point, however, is to influence and change policy. This unfortunately can be a long and messy process.

To keep our work as focused as possible, the Academy's board of directors reflected on our 2017–2020 Strategic Plan, reviewed our 2017 accomplishments, and then set annual priorities from which the 24 expert panels will develop their work plans for 2018.

As a reminder, our 4 strategic goals are:

- Influence the development and implementation of policy that improves the health of populations and achieves health equity.
- Influence practice design through nursing science to improve the health populations.

- Position the Academy and the nursing profession to lead change and drive policy and practice to improve health and healthcare.
- Assure Academy organizational excellence, communication, transparency, integrity, and accountability.

The board identified 5 priority areas under the broad umbrella of social justice/health equity and the Quadruple Aim include:

- Violence prevention
- Reproductive rights
- Opioid addiction
- Environmental health
- Toxic stress in children

Also identified were cross-cutting themes that are potentially relevant to all areas.

These include:

- Big Data/Informatics
- Bioethics
- Regulation
- Quality
- Global Health

Recently two calls were held with Expert Panel leadership to discuss this approach for 2018. We were clear that this doesn't mean fellows and expert panels who are passionate and knowledgeable about a topic that doesn't fit the list of priorities can't choose to develop relevant policy products. It does, however, mean we need timely, high quality, policy products addressing these five priorities.

The Academy will be more deliberate in developing comprehensive dissemination plans to reach those critical policymakers who can use our evidence based policy briefs to affect change. Timely execution of these dissemination plans will be a top priority. Our excellent policy work with specific recommendations to address healthcare challenges will be effective with a unique and specific outreach strategy to reach key stakeholders including our strategic partners, advocacy organizations, and the general public who can collectively work with the Academy to impact policy.

The American Academy of Nursing will not let an ongoing, distractive environment throw us off course. The important policy work of the Academy must remain mindful and targeted to make the most impact.

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