



# **Nursing Students' Vision for the Future of Nursing 2020-2030**

**PREPARED BY**

**The Pennsylvania Action Coalition &  
Student Nurses' Association of Pennsylvania**

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# OUR VOICES MATTER: NURSING STUDENTS ARE THE FUTURE OF NURSING

The PA Action Coalition and Student Nurses' Association of Pennsylvania joined forces in an effort to ensure that nursing students could make their voices heard in response to the Future of Nursing 2020-2030 Town Hall in Philadelphia. To do this, we created a short and mostly open-ended questionnaire survey to provide a platform for nursing students to share their opinions. Both the PA Action Coalition and SNAP advertised the survey to their constituents, and we are proud to share the results with the Future of Nursing Committee through this report.

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing shared that there is currently a total enrollment of 363,433 nursing students in a baccalaureate program in the United States. 363,433 voices that must be heard! We hope that you will take the nursing student voice into consideration as you prepare the Future of Nursing 2020-2030 Report, as nursing students are, indeed, the future of nursing.



**Anthony Scarpone-Lambert**

*NNCC Public Health Intern  
antsl@nursing.upenn.edu*



**Nina Finkle**

*PA Action Coalition Intern  
nfinkle@tulane.edu*



**Madeline Stadler**

*SNAP President  
president@snap-online.org*



**Zaharaa Davood**

*PA Action Coalition Coordinator  
zadavood@nncc.us*



**Jillian Bird**

*Nurse Liaison  
jbird@nncc.us*



**Jennifer Horn**

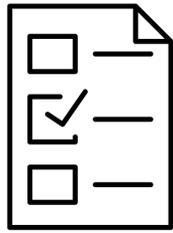
*PA Action Coalition Manager  
jhorn@nncc.us*

# SURVEY BREAKDOWN



8

question  
survey



How students planned to watch or attend the Future of Nursing 2020-2030 Philadelphia Town Hall:

18%

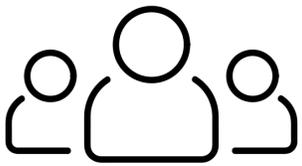
planned to  
watch

40%

planned to  
maybe watch

42%

planned to  
not watch



70

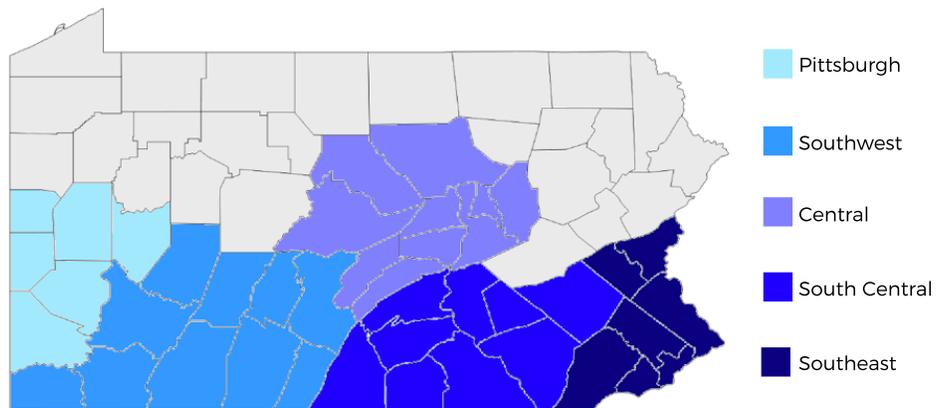
nursing  
students



15

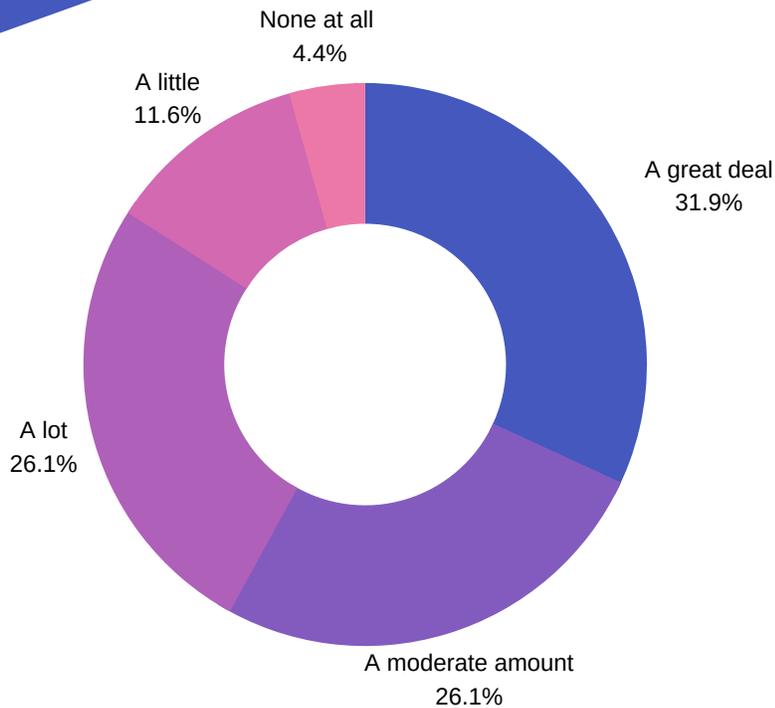
nursing  
schools

## Respondent Schools (According to PA Regions)



Carlow University	Light Blue	Gwynedd Mercy University	Darkest Blue	Temple University	Darkest Blue
Drexel University	Darkest Blue	Indiana University of PA	Medium Blue	University of Pennsylvania	Darkest Blue
Duquesne University	Light Blue	La Salle University	Darkest Blue	University of Pittsburgh	Light Blue
Franklin County Career & Tech Center	Darkest Blue	Moravian College	Darkest Blue	Villanova University	Darkest Blue
Greater Johnstown Career & Tech Center	Medium Blue	Penn State University	Purple	Widener University	Darkest Blue

# HOW EMPOWERED DO NURSING STUDENTS FEEL TO SOLVE HEALTHCARE'S GREATEST PROBLEMS?



Nursing students who answered this survey are, in general, feeling a lot of empowerment to solve healthcare's greatest problems. After further analysis, this result makes logical sense, considering a voluntary response bias exists within this sample. Nursing students who completed the survey needed to opt in to submit their opinions for the Future of Nursing Committee. Please note that the responses in this report come from nursing students who feel a lot of empowerment, are engaged within their educational institution, and are motivated to use their voice. Limitations of this report include a lack of nursing students who do not feel empowered to speak up and share their opinions on a voluntary platform.

**32%**  
*A great deal*

**26%**  
*A lot*

**26%**  
*A moderate amount*

**12%**  
*A little*

**4%**  
*None at all*

# NURSING STUDENTS' VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF NURSING

*Nursing students highlighted the following categories when asked to describe their vision for the future of nursing:*

## Education

- More affordable nursing schools with fewer multiple choice based exams
- Fewer clinical & school specific fees
  - Transportation
  - Attire: Scrubs, shoes, stethoscope
- More resources for nurses to complete research
- Increased emphasis on policy, design thinking, and community health
- Funding for graduate programs
- More mentorship opportunities for career paths outside of the clinical realm

## Care

- Nurses improving patient outcomes by following evidence-based practice
- Better nurse-to-patient ratios
- Improved care coordination
- Nurses integrated more greatly into community health beyond the bedside
- Caring for patients without the thought or stress of finances
- Still valuing the bedside even as nurses' role expand

## Culture

- Improved work environments for nurses
  - Safer work environments
  - Emphasis placed on wellness in the nursing profession
  - No more tolerance for bullying
  - Nurses feel more comfortable to network
- More respect and recognition for nurses and their accomplishments
- Acceptance of job positions outside of acute care
- Increased diversity in the nursing workforce

## Empowerment

- Nurses feeling more empowered to solve healthcare's greatest problems
- Nurses pursuing more leadership positions in the c-suite
- Nurses running for Congress and advocating on Capitol Hill
- Nurses obtaining master's and doctoral degrees
- Healthcare systems investing in nursing innovations



# NURSING STUDENTS' VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF NURSING (CONT.)

*The following are quotes from nursing students' responses regarding their vision for the future of nursing:*

"Nurses receiving the credit and recognition they actually deserve."

"Safe nursing ratios, nursing innovation involvement, increased nurse recruitment and retention."

"For nursing to be more accessible. Speaking as someone who is having to take on all of their own student debt, the nursing program has only made the financial burden of college greater."

"Patient-centered nursing where all patients are viewed in an unbiased manner with the patients' mental well-being accounting for as much as their physical well-being."

"My vision for the future of nursing is a profession which embraces its legacy of innovation. I hope every single nurse understands his or her power to be a disruptive innovator and change healthcare for the better."

"I see a field in which nursing education and practice legislation are standardized, providing us with the confidence and ability to practice across the nation. Research is brought to the forefront of nursing leadership, integrating with evidence-based practice and technology in order to provide patients with exemplary care. Nurses will certainly have to bear more responsibilities due to the employment and patient population forecasts, and we will successfully advocate for improved working conditions. Nurses will continue to be the most trusted profession, and will grow more diverse to represent the population that we serve."

# WHAT ROLES SHOULD NURSES PLAY IN THE FUTURE?

*Nursing students highlighted the following roles when asked to describe their vision for the roles that nurses will play in the future:*



# WHAT ROLES SHOULD NURSES PLAY IN THE FUTURE? (CONT.)

*The following are quotes from nursing students' responses to the roles that nurses should play in the future:*

"From patient bedside to developing cures."

"Nurses should play several roles not just in direct care but in planning, leadership and all aspects."

"Performing as executives of hospitals, leading departments of health, running clinics, fighting for access to care."

"I think we need to get more involved in policies that are being made in the government and need a more administrative role."

"I think the public in general should listen to nurses regarding their viewpoint of the healthcare system and how to find solutions for various issues in the healthcare/medical world."

"Care coordinators and case management from hospital to community... Higher levels of community engagement, better support for home health nurses and encouraging community nursing."

"Researching how to improve patient outcomes and treatment, education of patients as well as other nurses, leadership corporately and medically, invention and innovation, practicing in private clinics independently and in hospitals, providing our patient-centered expertise to healthcare leadership to focus the conversation."

"Nurses should be entrepreneurs who are leading healthcare startups and projects to advance quality care for all. Nurses should be politicians, fighting for important issues that impact the well-being of our communities. Nurses should be more than just bedside nurses, nurses should be present in every field: tech, business, design, etc."

"I think a lot of nursing is focused on illness care instead of healthcare and would love to see some more nursing initiatives for upstream health effects as well as active roles in advocating for better healthcare for the trans community, immigrant communities, and advocating for better health outcomes for people living in poverty, recognizing the systemic inequalities and health outcomes."

# NURSING STUDENTS' QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

(In no particular order)

*The following are nursing students' questions & comments for the Committee:*

"How can I become more involved with the Future of Nursing Committee?"

"What can I do to help as a nursing student?"

"I feel as though the problem with the healthcare system, with people unable to get care they need or are tens of thousands of dollars in debt, is essentially a gunshot wound that we are trying to cover up with a bandaid. Hospitals are more interested in making money than treating our sick and injured."

"I am passionate about eating disorder research and have not come across much, if any, literature concerning how nurses can improve the care of this population, or how they can look for warning signs of disordered eating (especially in overlooked populations such as those of normal/overweight and males). I would love to assist in raising awareness in the nursing field about this prevalent, serious illness."

"What can we do to make clinical requirements less rigorous?"

"I hope that this committee can find a way to help as many people as possible."

"Why is there such an emphasis on acute care in current nursing education? Why do nurses still not understand their innovative abilities? Why are not all nurses empowered?"

"How can we encourage and motivate more students to go to nursing school and stick to it?"

"Nursing schools are having the same problem as other schooling problems. Students are taught to pass a test and not to learn a trade."

"I have pretty bad anxiety and depression. It really showed up after starting my nursing schooling... I find it trivial and problematic that I cannot use marijuana to medicate. I will be going to see a specialized doctor soon about this, but my school will still drug test for it... What is the future of marijuana as an alternative medication and how it will fit into nursing, because I am an advocate for it."

"Thank you for your work and I hope we continue to strive towards better health outcomes, recognizing the influence of things like social determinants of health and work towards changing those determinants."

"What more can we do to address the necessary healthcare for all? So much treatment or even just examinations are expensive and so many people cannot afford it, not even close."

"Nurses should get paid more."

"Good luck, thank you for all you are doing for the profession of nursing and healthcare!"

"Tell nursing schools to focus more on clinical experience than HESI test scores to determine how well-prepared nursing students are."

"I truly would like to know how we can make nursing less stressful in college? I also want to know why the textbooks, materials, or supplies for nursing are so expensive. A lot of kids, first of all, struggle to afford to pay for college plus they have to drop another grand on just textbooks, etc."

"Encourage nurses to push their boundaries."

"It would be really nice if our instructors talked to us about getting hired."

"I love the idea of showing students early how far they can go with their careers. We touched upon it very briefly but I already want to know more about my opportunities for furthering my education."

"How can I plan financially to go back for my Master's/Doctorate/PhD? When do you recommend going back for these degrees?"

# NURSING STUDENTS' COMMENTS AT THE FUTURE OF NURSING 2020-2030 PHILADELPHIA TOWN HALL

Good morning. I am Elise Krikorian, a member of the National Student Nurses Association Board of Directors and chair of the NSNA Population and Global Health Committee. I am a BSN student entering my junior year at Penn State University. Thank you for inviting the NSNA to offer the insights of nursing students about the future of nursing. Established in 1952, NSNA has 60,000 pre-licensure student members.

There is movement around the globe to establish the nursing profession as a major influencer and contributor to global health. The Nursing Now Campaign is evidence that those who support the nursing profession recognize the need to have nurses onboard for the global goal of universal health coverage or UHC. UHC means that all individuals and communities receive the health services they need without suffering financial hardship, which includes the full spectrum of essential, quality health services. Nursing students graduate without ever hearing about UHC in their education, just as they have learned nothing about healthcare financing. New graduates enter the workplace without understanding where their salaries come from.

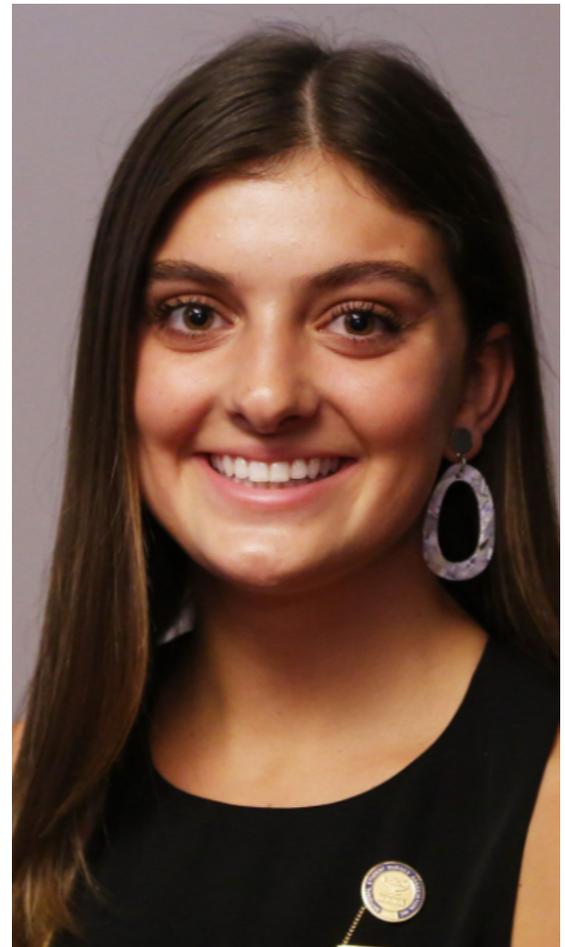
In pre-licensure nursing education, I believe that there is a lack of connection between the social determinants of health and how health care is actually delivered. For example, there is a lack of awareness about the complexity of adverse childhood events, ACES. This is something I have learned about in non-nursing classes, and here again there is a failure to bridge this information of how ACES such as physical, verbal, and sexual abuse, physical and emotional neglect, impact the health of populations throughout life. Learning about the disparities and inequities that individuals and populations experience, influences how we assess and address health, and how we can create a healthier future.

It is exciting to see many people focusing on diet and nutrition to improve health. However, many people and families continue to eat diets high in carbohydrates and fat because they may lack the resources to improve their nutrition and/or they are victims of fast-food advertising. As seen in a study by Cancer Research U.K., being more familiar with marketing campaigns for fast-food chains was linked with an increased likelihood of eating unhealthy food and gaining weight, across all ages and genders. The study also found, and I am paraphrasing, "those from deprived background have the most to gain from regulating junk food ads," end quote. As nurses, we have the power to teach about healthy diets but, again we need to bridge the gap to teach HOW a healthier lifestyle can be achieved.

One priority that the Future of Nursing Study may want to focus on is Climate Health. The Lancet, Britain's premier health journal, calls climate change "the biggest global health threat of the 21st century." We have known about the inequities of local environmental impacts and now, we face a much broader and multifaceted threat to health as the environment is rapidly evolving. This evolution will impact animal and plant life as well as water and weather systems. Research is needed now to determine how nurses and other professionals will manage the complex comfort and care of people sickened by climate change. Innovation in the preservation of life impacted by altercations in the environment is an area that nurse scientists working on interdisciplinary teams will need to focus their studies. The Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments and the Nursing Collaborative on Climate Change and Health are working to educate nurses about the impacts of climate change and NSNA is engaged in this work.

The Future of Nursing Research Study must examine how ALL nursing education should prepare the next generation to focus on complex population and global health issues. Nursing has a leadership role to play in every one of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Social Determinants of Health, and health inequities. Adding topics such as healthcare financing, ACES, nutrition education and climate change to pre-licensure nursing education using systems theory is a step in the direction of improving public health.

I am a next-generation nurse. I want an education that will not only prepare me for safe nursing practice, but that teaches me the leadership skills I will need to make real change in healthcare and create a culture of health for all. Thank you.



**Elise  
Krikorian**

Board of Directors 19-20  
National Student Nurses'  
Association  
BSN Nursing student at the  
Pennsylvania State University

[directore@nsnainc.org](mailto:directore@nsnainc.org)

# NURSING STUDENTS' COMMENTS AT THE FUTURE OF NURSING 2020-2030 PHILADELPHIA TOWN HALL (CONT.)

My name is Anthony Scarpone-Lambert. I am a current junior at the University of Pennsylvania studying nursing, and an incoming PhD student through the Hillman Scholars Program in Nursing Innovation. Additionally, I am a nurse entrepreneur, and founded a startup called Text-911, which has directly impacted over a million lives. Today, I hope to represent nursing students, whose voices may perhaps be the most important, as we are the future of nursing.

When entering nursing school, it is easy for nursing students to realize that the emphasis in our education is focused on acute care and clinical experience, rather than the numerous paths a nurse can take, such as management, research, policy, or entrepreneurship. This summer, while interning at the National Nurse-Led Care Consortium and working with the Pennsylvania Action Coalition, I conducted a small, informal study to investigate nursing students' career objectives and opinions on their nursing education. 22 nursing students from 6 nursing schools in the Philadelphia region completed my survey, and the results were not surprising. When asked to rank the top 3 most important types of nursing, not a single vote was given to "Nurse entrepreneur," while "ER nurse" received 12 votes. Students ranked "Design thinking" as the topic they learned about least in their nursing program, and only 9% of nursing students felt a great deal of empowerment to solve healthcare's greatest problems.

This got me thinking. When you tell a nursing student to complete a head-to-toe assessment on a patient, do we just send them out into a hospital assuming they will know what to do? No, we train them with numerous hours of hands-on clinical and simulation experience. But what happens when you encourage a nursing student to be innovative? Are they receiving the same hands-on experience to prepare them to innovate? Objectively, no. So, what does this mean for the future of nursing?

It means we must realize the vital responsibility we have to better prepare nursing students to feel empowered and capable to solve the many problems that are currently existing in our healthcare system. To do this, design thinking and innovation must be required topics in our nursing education. I suggest a nursing senior design project or a design thinking case study course that all students must complete, because I believe that exposing nursing students to these topics, with the same hands-on mentality that we teach clinical nursing skills, will create the nurses of tomorrow that we all envision: powerful, compassionate, and empowered innovators. Thank you.



## Anthony Scarpone-Lambert

BSN Nursing Student & Hillman Scholar at the University of Pennsylvania

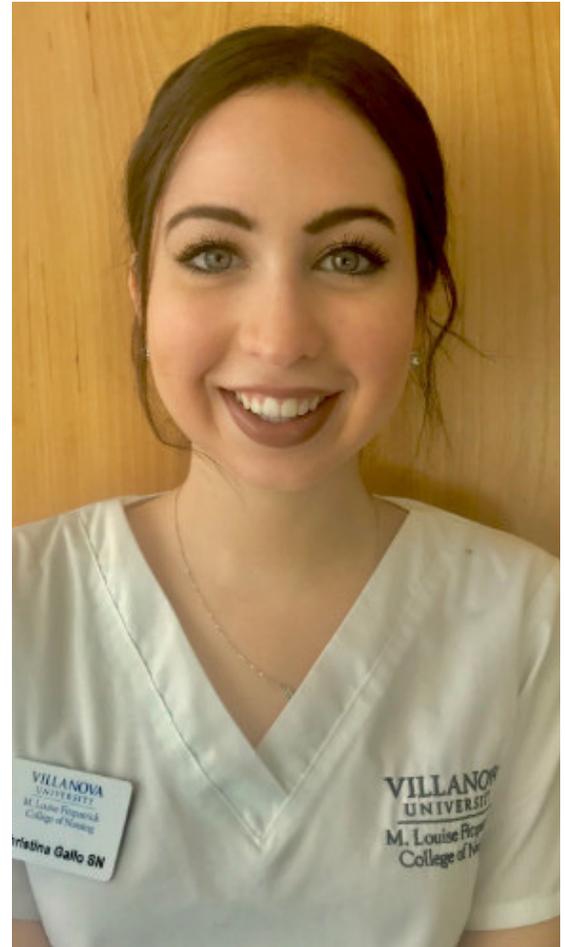
[antsl@nursing.upenn.edu](mailto:antsl@nursing.upenn.edu)

# NURSING STUDENTS' COMMENTS AT THE FUTURE OF NURSING 2020-2030 PHILADELPHIA TOWN HALL (CONT.)

My name is Christina Gallo, and I am a senior nursing student at Villanova University in the alternate sequence program. I transferred into Villanova's nursing school after I realized the immense role nurses play in caring for others and positively impacting their lives. Originally, I thought my dream to nurse patients back to health was only possible in the hospital setting, a common misperception many nursing students share. This summer, my internship at Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) taught me that I could make my dream, of holistically caring for others, a reality outside of the hospital setting. Throughout this experience, I learned that caring for a patient goes way beyond the bedside. It starts at the center which is how they feel, what they are going through, what resources they have, and what I can do as the nurse to help them. I have had the pleasure of working alongside the most compassionate, dedicated, and hard-working nurses, who go above and beyond to care for our low-resourced, first-time mothers in Philadelphia.

Holistic care is the foundation of nursing and is what the nurses and staff at NFP exemplify each and every day. I utilized the clinical nursing skills taught at Villanova during my internship at NFP, and furthered these skills to areas that I did not realize directly impact the health of the community. From practicing cultural competency to partaking in collaborative team case studies, NFP nurses care for the whole client. This nursing care goes beyond the application of clinical techniques, but with assessing and assisting with the numerous external factors impacting their health. These factors include: access to affordable housing, financial instability, resource deficiencies, and food insecurity, all while being culturally aware.

This impactful opportunity has shown me the importance of nursing schools providing their students with new interactive experiences, like teaching a mother about breastfeeding, or advocating for safer housing regulations in Philadelphia. The next generation of nurses starts now, and with the continual shift towards home visiting nursing, a greater emphasis on community health is a necessity for nursing education.



## Christina Gallo

BSN Nursing Student at Villanova University

[cgallo7@villanova.edu](mailto:cgallo7@villanova.edu)

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## **1** A more well-rounded & affordable nursing education that prepares students for the future

While healthcare progresses into the future, nursing education is falling behind, failing to provide students with above adequate and holistic opportunities to explore, via hands-on experiences, the many paths a nurse can take.

## **2** Increasing the autonomy of the nursing profession while improving work conditions

Nursing students envision that in the future of nursing, nurses will have the ability and the respect to make greater decisions in the care for their patients. Further, nursing students believe that nurses deserve better work conditions, including, but not limited to, an emphasis on wellness, collaboration, and better nurse-to-patient ratios.

## **3** Expanding opportunities and acceptance for nurses beyond bedside nursing

In the future of nursing, nurses must feel empowered and able to run for congress, pursue opportunities in the c-suite, and enter jobs outside of bedside nursing, such as in healthcare tech, entrepreneurship, and research.

## **4** More nurses working in the community to improve care coordination

Nurses must follow their patients into the community, working to fight the social determinants of health on the grounds. By expanding nurses' role within community health, we can aim to improve care coordination.

## **5** Transparency

To ensure that nursing students are able to continue feeling empowered to use their voices, the Committee should recommend the need for more transparency on how nursing students can get involved and help shape the future of nursing that we all envision. Perhaps this could be a responsibility given to the Action Coalitions.



**To the Future of Nursing  
2020-2030 Committee:  
Thank you.**

**FOR QUESTIONS OR FEEDBACK**

**[jhorn@nccc.us](mailto:jhorn@nccc.us) | [zadavood@nccc.us](mailto:zadavood@nccc.us)**