

Board of Nursing

Mission and philosophy

The Wyoming State Board of Nursing is responsible for the protection of the public's health, welfare, and safety through the regulation of nursing, nursing education, nursing practice, and disciplinary standards. The Board of Nursing's responsibility is to implement a cost-effective and efficient system of regulation, which meets the consumer demand for safe, competent, ethical practitioners of nursing which includes advanced practice nurses, registered professional nurses, licensed practical nurses, and certified nursing assistants.

Major accomplishments and efficiencies

The Board of Nursing regulates the practice and education of the largest numbers and variety of health care practitioners in the state. The board licensed and regulated the practice of 11,686 licensee/certificate holders. This includes 273 advanced practitioners of nursing (APNs), 5573 registered professional nurses (RNs), 1116 licensed practical nurses (LPNs), and 4724 certified nursing assistants (CNAs) in Wyoming as of June 30, 2005. This represents a decrease of 1211 licensees (10 percent) since last year. Specifically, this includes a decrease of 7 APNs (2 percent), an increase of 70 RNs (10 percent), a decrease of 175 LPNs (14 percent), and a decrease of 99 CNAs (15 percent).

The board licensed by endorsement 617 licensees. This represents an increase of 36 percent over the past year. Of these, 32 were advanced practice nurses (18 percent increase), 386 registered professional nurses (of which two were foreign educated nurses) (45 percent increase), 80 licensed practical nurses (13 percent increase) and 119 certified nursing assistants (17 percent increase).

The Board re-licensed 54 registered professional nurses (four per cent decrease), 14 licensed practical nurses (seven per cent decrease) and 59 certified nursing assistants 32 percent increase); reactivated the licenses of 17 registered professional nurses (42 percent decrease); and deemed 51 certified nursing assistants (32 percent increase).

The Board verified the licenses of 441 persons to other states in FY05 compared to 626 in FY04. This represents a 30 percent decrease in verifications since FY04. This includes three advanced practice nurses, 298 registered professional nurses (60 percent decrease), 34 licensed practical nurses (75 percent decrease) and 106 certified nursing assistants (68 percent decrease).

General information

Cheryl L. Koski, Executive Director

Agency contact

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Year established

1909

Statutory references

WS 33-21-119 thru WS 33-21-157

Number of authorized personnel

7 full time

Organizational structure

Administration and Information > Board of Nursing >
Executive Director > Assistant Executive Director > Board of
Nursing Staff

Clients served

General public; Registered Nurses (RNs); Advanced Practice Nurses (APNs); Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs); Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs); nurse aide training programs; nursing education programs; health care facilities

Budget information

General funds	\$ -0-
Federal funds	-0-
Agency funds	788,285
TOTAL.....	\$788,285

Agency board reports to

Administration & Information

Number of members

Seven

Meeting Frequency

At least once every six months; generally four–six times per year

The Board issued temporary permits to 311 registered professional nurses (six per cent increase), 179 licensed practical nurses (32 percent increase), and three certified nursing assistants 33 percent increase).

The Board examined 202 candidates for registered nurse licensure (8 percent decrease; 86.38 overall pass rate; national pass rate: 88.15 percent), 107 candidates for practical nurse licensure (17 percent decrease; 97.9 percent pass rate; national pass rate: 95.92 percent), and 851 candidates for nursing assistant certification (12 percent decrease; 95.92 percent pass rate). The overall performance of Wyoming candidates on the national licensing examination exceeded the national mean performance of all candidates in the United States for both registered professional and practical nursing licensees. The Board certified 22 Home Health Aides.

The Board enforced the education and training standards for 12 in-state nursing education programs across the state, which includes seven associate degree-nursing programs, four practical nursing programs and one baccalaureate program. There were 210 graduates of registered professional nursing education programs in the state (a decrease of eight graduates or 4 percent since last year) and 145 graduates of practical nursing programs (an increase of 41 graduates or 39 percent since last year). The board also granted re-approval for two out-of-state nursing education programs to provide clinical nursing education training in Wyoming.

It must be noted that the Wyoming Investment in Nursing Program (WYIN) has funded 32 nursing students this past year. Despite the declining number of graduates from the nursing education programs overall, the Wyoming Community College Commission has reported that the WYIN Program has had a high retention rate for those persons receiving nursing education program loans.

The Board issued 18 advisory opinions, which includes two addressing advanced practice registered nurses, six addressing registered nursing, three addressing practical nursing, five addressing certified nursing assistants and one addressing nursing education.

The Board also approved two licensed practice nurse refresher courses.

The Board monitored the education and training standards for 35 nurse aide-training programs. This includes 10 nurse aide training programs in long term care, six in high schools, 16 in community colleges (includes out-reach sites), and three privately contracted programs. The board visited and approved/re-approved 16 nurse aide training programs this past year. Full approval was granted to three new programs. The board placed three programs on inactive status as a result of one or more of the following reasons: no program director/instructor, and /or discontinuance of classes. Eight nurse aide training programs in long term care facilities lost their ability to offer a program due to a substandard survey by the

Office of Health Facilities. However, six of these facilities were given a waiver to offer the program.

The Board processed and conducted investigations on 181 cases against registered professional nurses, licensed practical nurses and certified nursing assistants/nurse aides for violations of the Wyoming Nurse Practice Act and/or the Board Administrative Rules and Regulations. This represents an increase of 37 cases or 20 percent since the last reporting period. These cases included 61 complaints (37 percent increase) and 87 applications for licensure/certification (32 percent increase). Of the disciplinary cases, six involved abuse (3 CNA and three RN), 10 involved neglect (three CNA, two LPN and five RN), three involved misappropriation of property (3 CNA), 31 involved substance abuse (11 CNA, five LPN and eighteen RN), eleven involved practicing beyond their scope of practice or inappropriate delegation (five CNA, one LPN and five RN), four involved unprofessional conduct (two CNA and two RN), 13 involved discipline in another state (four CNA, one LPN and five RN), two involved HIPPA or confidentiality violations (one LPN and one RN), five involved fraud/deceit (four CNA and one RN), 57 involved criminal history violations (42 CNA, three LPN and 12 RN), 10 involved working without a license (six CNA, three LPN and one RN) and 35 failure to disclose criminal history (22 CNA, 6 LPN and 4 RN). The board dismissed three cases, issued 41 advisory letters, placed conditions on 14 license, revoked three (3) licenses/certifications, issued six (6) letters of reprimand, approved the licensure/certification of 17 applicants, denied six applications for licensure/certification and accepted the voluntary surrender of two licensees. The board conducted four administrative contested case hearings. The number of cases listed is greater than the number of dispositions due to more than one case against individual licensees/certificate holders.

In addition to the above disciplinary caseload, the Board reviewed and processed an additional 33 applications for failure to disclose criminal histories. This includes 22 CNAs, 5 LPNs and 6 RNs. Of these applications, 10 CNAs, 3 LPNs and 4 RNs received advisory letters. The remainder of the applications are either incomplete or still under review.

The Board of Nursing continues to contract with the Wyoming Professional Assistance Program to allow WPAP to serve as the Board's agent for the purpose of monitoring all impaired nurses in the state who enter the program either voluntarily or through order of the board. Currently, there are 35 registered professional nurses in the program.

The Board continues to work with the Department of Health, Office of Public Health and Terrorism Preparedness, to assure adequate nurse volunteers in times of disaster or declared emergencies. The board revised their renewal form to assist in recruitment and renewal of nurse volunteers for the Wyoming Nurse Alert and in

response to increasing requests for data related to the nursing workforce.

The Board is very concerned about increasing communication to its customers. They began issuing a quarterly publication with Publishing Concepts, Inc. in January 2005 and has published three issues during this past year. The publication includes actions by the Board such as Advisory Opinions and articles of relating to nursing.

Goals and objectives

Quality of Life Results: Protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

Contribution to Quality of Life: To ensure safe practitioners of nursing through the regulation and enforcement of nursing, nursing education, practice, and disciplinary standards.

Five Primary Programs and/or Functions of the Board

- **Licensing:** Licensing and certification of all advanced practice registered nurses, registered professional nurses, licensed practical nurses and certified nursing assistants.
- **Practice:** Nursing and nurse aide/nursing assistant standards of practice.
- **Education:** Nursing and nurse aide/nursing assistant educational standards and approval.
- **Discipline:** Compliance with disciplinary standards and investigation of all complaints and applications with positive criminal backgrounds or violations of nursing.
- **Administration:** Assuring prompt responses to workforce data requests, proper dissemination of information to public and provision of a volunteer nursing workforce in times of emergency/disaster.

Performance Measure #1: Reduce the time between receipt of a complete application to the time of licensure/certification. (The quicker the person is licensed/certified, the sooner they go to work to care for WY residents.)

80 percent of the applications will be issued a temporary permit or a permanent license/certificate within 7-10 business days of receipt of a completed license.

Performance Measure #2: Timely adjudication of complaints. (Nurses/nurse aides that have complaints filed continue to be able to work. If there is sufficient evidence that there is potential harm to the public, the Board needs to take action to protect the public from these nurses/nurse aides.)

90 percent of the complaints will be adjudicated within 12 months of receipt of the complaint.

Performance Measure #3: Nursing Education programs and nurse aide Training, Competency and Evaluation Programs will exceed the 1st time national pass rate for their respective licensure/certifying examinations. (Adequately prepared nurses/nurse aides who are able to pass their licensure/certifying examination the first time, demonstrate minimal competency and are available to begin caring for WY residents sooner.)

90 percent of all nursing programs and Nurse Aide Training, Competency, and Evaluation Programs will exceed the national 1st time pass rate for examination (NCLEX-PN, NCLEX-RN, NAAP).

Performance Measure #4: Customers will be familiar with all the nursing and nursing assistant/nurse aide practice standards. (If customers are familiar with the practice standards, we will provide safe, competent care to the citizens of Wyoming.)

80 percent increase in the use of the practice site on the Board of Nursing web page.

Performance Measure #5: Provide comprehensive nursing and nursing assistant workforce data to customers. (Provision of workforce data will allow for policy development and program planning to meet the nursing and nursing assistant/nurse aide workforce needs.)

80 percent of the requests for nursing and nursing assistant/nurse aide workforce data will be provided within 5 business days.

Board of Nursing organizational chart

