

ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION  
SERIES ON HEALTH POLICY

Diana J. Mason • Stephen L. Isaacs • David C. Colby

EDITORS



# THE NURSING PROFESSION

DEVELOPMENT, CHALLENGES,  
AND OPPORTUNITIES

# **CONTENTS**

**Foreword**

**Preface**

**Editors' Introduction**

**Acknowledgments**

**Review of the Nursing Field**

**The Nursing Profession:  
Development, Challenges, and  
Opportunities**

**A Brief History of Nursing**

**The Nursing Profession**

**Current Issues and Challenges**

**Opportunities: A Vision For The Future**

**The History of Nursing and the  
Role of Nurses**

**Chapter 1: Notes On Nursing: What It  
Is, And What It Is Not**

**Chapter 2: The Nature of Nursing**

*Development of A Concept*  
*Unique Function*  
*Nursing Practice*  
*Nursing Research*  
*Nursing Education*  
*Summary*

### *Chapter 3: A Caring Dilemma: Womanhood and Nursing in Historical Perspective*

*The Meaning of Caring*  
*Caring As Duty*  
*The Professed Nurse*  
*The Hospital Nurse*  
*The Influence of Nightingale*  
*The Contradictions of Reform*  
*A Different Vision*  
*Beyond The Obligation To Care*  
*Altruism With Autonomy*

### *Chapter 4: Nursing as Metaphor*

### *Chapter 5: Stages of Nursing's Political Development: Where We've Been and Where We Ought to Go*

*Stage 1*  
*Stage 2*  
*Stage 3*  
*Stage 4*

**In Pursuit of Stage 4**

**Conclusion**

**Acknowledgments**

## **Chapter 6: Knowledge Development in Nursing: Our Historical Roots and Future Opportunities**

**The Early Years**

**The Transition Years**

**Nursing Research Becomes Nursing Science**

**Future Opportunities**

**Acknowledgments**

## **Nursing Education and Training**

### **Chapter 7: The Goldmark Report**

**The Nurse in Public Health**

**Hospital Training School**

### **Chapter 8: Career Pathways in Nursing: Entry Points and Academic Progression**

**Traditional Entry Points into Nursing**

**Emerging Entry Points**

**Moving Along The Education Continuum**

**Conclusion**



## **Chapter 9: Nursing the Great Society: The Impact of the Nurse Training Act of 1964**

**Influences Inside Nursing**

**Influences Outside Nursing**

**Public and Private Activism**

**How A Private Agenda Became Public Policy**

**The Political Climate Chills**

**Growth On Two Levels**

**Nursing's Aspirations**

**Afterword**

**Acknowledgments**

## **Advanced Practice Nursing**

### **Chapter 10: Role and Quality of Nurse Practitioner Practice: A Policy Issue**

### **Chapter 11: Primary Care Outcomes in Patients Treated by Nurse Practitioners or Physicians: A Randomized Trial**

**Methods**

**Results**

**Comment**

**Acknowledgment**

## **Chapter 12: Nurse-Midwives and Nurse Anesthetists: The Cutting Edge in Specialist Practice**

**Brief History**

**Nurses Or Something Else**

**Complement Or Substitute?**

**Money**

**Conclusions**

**Acknowledgments**

## **Chapter 13: Lessons Learned from Testing the Quality Cost Model of Advanced Practice Nursing (APN) Transitional Care**

**The Quality Cost Model of APN Transitional Care**

**What Has Been Learned**

**Questions Remaining To Be Answered**

## **Chapter 14: Reaching Consensus on a Regulatory Model: What Does This Mean for APRNs?**

**How Did This Historic Agreement Come About?**

**What is The New Aprn Regulatory Model?**

**What Does This Mean To Currently Licensed APRNS?**

*How Will The Model Impact NP Education, Certification, and Licensure?*  
*Implementation of The Model*  
*How Will A Uniform Regulatory Model Impact APRNS?*

## **The Nursing Workforce/Nursing Shortages**

### **Chapter 15: Implications of an Aging Registered Nurse Workforce**

*Methods*

*Results*

*Comment*

*Acknowledgments*

### **Chapter 16: Global Nurse Migration**

*Migration and The Global Healthcare Workforce*

*Policy Implications For The U.S. Nursing Workforce*

*Summary*

## **Quality, Safety, and Cost**

### **Chapter 17: Nurse-Staffing Levels and the Quality of Care in Hospitals**

*Methods*

***Risk Adjustment and Characteristics of The Hospitals***

***Results***

***Discussion***

***Acknowledgments***

***Chapter 18: Hospital Nurse Staffing and Patient Mortality, Nurse Burnout, and Job Dissatisfaction***

***Methods***

***Results***

***Comment***

***Acknowledgments***

***Chapter 19: Nurse Staffing in Hospitals: Is There a Business Case for Quality?***

***Study Data and Methods***

***Acknowledgments***

***Specialty Practice in Nursing***

***Chapter 20: Long-Term Care Policy Issues***

***Poor Quality of Care and Weak Regulatory Enforcement***

***Inadequate Nursing Home Staffing Levels***

***Nursing Facility Reimbursement Reform***

[\*Corporate Ownership Transparency\*](#)  
[\*Home and Community-Based Services\*](#)  
[\*Public Financing of Long-Term Care\*](#)  
[\*Summary\*](#)

## [\*\*Chapter 21: The Future of Home Care\*\*](#)

[\*The Legacy of Home Care\*](#)  
[\*Medicare: Home Care's Second Coming\*](#)  
[\*Reining in A Benefit Out of Control\*](#)  
[\*Home Care's Future\*](#)

## [\*\*Chapter 22: Follow the Money: Funding Streams and Public Health Nursing\*\*](#)

[\*The Perspective of Public Health  
Changes Over Time\*](#)  
[\*Financing Public Health\*](#)  
[\*The Impact on Nursing\*](#)  
[\*Health Reform and Managed Care\*](#)  
[\*What About Nursing?\*](#)

## [\*\*Chapter 23: Swamp Nurse\*\*](#)

## [\*\*Chapter 24: Role of the School Nurse in Providing School Health Services\*\*](#)

[\*School Nurse Definition\*](#)  
[\*Background\*](#)  
[\*School Nurse Role\*](#)  
[\*School Nurse Activities\*](#)



**School Health Services Team**  
**Professional Preparation For School Nurses**  
**Conclusion**  
**Recommendations**

**Afterword**

**The Editors**

## ***Cover Photo: The Evolving Face of Nursing***

Mural by Meg Seligman

Photo by Steven Weinik

For years, the most popular mural in Philadelphia, the “city of murals,” was the nursing mural (“A Tribute to Nursing”) on the side of a building at Broad and Vine Streets. That mural focused on the history of nursing rather than its future. When the wall became compromised, the city enlisted the support of the Independence Foundation and others to commission a new nursing mural by internationally known muralist Meg Seligman. After interviewing many nurses who spoke about the various dimensions of their current work and opportunities for innovations in health care, Seligman designed a mural that focused on contemporary nursing with links to its past and future. Titled “The Evolving Face of Nursing,” the 6,500 square foot mural incorporates the faces of nurses and key images that convey the intellectual, creative, and emotional work of nursing through images and symbols. This dynamic mural changes color and emphasis at night through the use of LED lighting—a feature that Seligman used for the first time in this mural. The mural was unveiled on October 6, 2010. The cover photograph by Philadelphia-based photographer, Steven Weinik, shows its location within the community, symbolizing the work of diverse nurses with individuals, families, and communities.

# THE NURSING PROFESSION

Development, Challenges,  
and Opportunities

EDITORS

DIANA J. MASON, RN, PhD, FAAN  
STEPHEN L. ISAACS, JD  
DAVID C. COLBY, PhD

FOREWORD BY  
RISA LAVIZZO-MOUREY, MD, MBA

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We dedicate this book to the memory of C. Patrick Crow, who died shortly after editing its lead chapter. Over the course of the past fifteen years, Pat edited both the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation *Anthology* and its Series on Health Policy. He was an extraordinary editor and, even more important, an exemplary human being. We shall miss him.

*SLI, DCC, DJM*

# ***FOREWORD***

Like the other four books in the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health Policy Series,<sup>1</sup> *The Nursing Profession: Development, Challenges, and Opportunities* focuses on a discipline or profession that has been a Foundation priority for many years. Strengthening the nursing profession has been of central importance to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation over its nearly forty-year existence, and we have devoted more than \$200 million to the growth and improvement of nursing education and practice. Our dedication to nursing continues the legacy of our founder. In his personal philanthropy and as the head of his own New Brunswick-based foundation, Robert Wood Johnson was genuinely interested in improving nursing, and gave generously to amplify the role of nurses in improving health. The foundation that bears his name has sustained that commitment.

As far back as 1973, the Foundation awarded a series of grants to develop an emerging field—nurse practitioners—an idea that was, at the time, untested and controversial. These grants demonstrated that nurse practitioners could provide high-quality primary care services in remote rural areas and underserved inner cities. Since that time, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has invested in:

- Strengthening nursing school faculty and leadership
- Addressing nursing shortages
- Improving the nursing workforce
- Conducting research on nursing
- Developing public health nursing
- Establishing nurse-run school health centers
- Improving hospital nursing

And this is only a partial list.

*The Nursing Profession: Development, Challenges, and Opportunities* begins with a comprehensive review of the nursing field by Diana Mason, the Rudin Professor of Nursing at the Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing, City University of New York, and former editor-in-chief of the *American Journal of Nursing*. Mason's chapter is followed by reprints of twenty-four of the most influential or significant articles on nursing—some of them classic pieces dating back to Florence Nightingale, others presenting more current thinking on critical issues. This source material is rarely found in one place.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Initiative on the Future of Nursing at the Institute of Medicine (IOM) issued its report in October 2010. It sets forth a blueprint for nursing that can guide policymakers and those in the health care professions. We hope that *The Nursing Profession: Development, Challenges, and Opportunities* will be a worthy companion to the IOM report. Both publications illustrate our dedication to improving a field that is so critical to the nation's health and are especially timely, because "a reformed health care system must include an adequate supply of well-trained professionals who can deliver care to all Americans. Nurses are at the center of this discussion."<sup>2</sup> I am pleased and proud that the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has played an important role in nursing's development and will continue to do so in the future.

*Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, MD, MBA*

*President and CEO*

*The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation*

*Princeton, New Jersey*

*May 2011*

## NOTES

1. Isaacs, S. L., & Knickman, J. R., (Eds). *Generalist medicine and the U.S. health system*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004; Lear, J. G., Isaacs, S. L., & Knickman, J. R. (Eds). *School health services and programs*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006; Warner, K. E., Isaacs, S. L., & Knickman, J. R. *Tobacco control policy*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008; Meier, D. E., Isaacs, S. L., & Hughes, R. G., (Eds). *Palliative care: Transforming the care of serious illness*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010.
2. Rother, J., & Lavizzo-Mourey, R. Addressing the nursing shortage: A critical element in health reform. *Health Affairs* 28, w260-w264 (2009).



# ***PREFACE***

**SUSAN B. HASSMILLER**

**Susan B. Hassmiller, PhD, RN, FAAN, serves as the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Special Adviser on Nursing and Director of the Initiative on the Future of Nursing.**

*May we hope that, when we are all dead and gone, leaders will arise who have been personally experienced in the hard, practical work, the difficulties, and the joys of organizing nursing reforms, and who will lead far beyond anything we have done!*

—Florence Nightingale

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Institute of Medicine (IOM) became partners in 2008 to develop the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Initiative on the Future of Nursing at the IOM. A core product of the Initiative was an IOM report called *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*, which was issued in October 2010.<sup>1</sup> The report examined the capacity of the nursing workforce to meet the demands of a newly reformed health care system, keeping in mind the needs of an aging population and the emphasis on care in the community. It made a series of recommendations that address a range of public policy and system changes, including vital roles for nurses in designing and implementing a more effective and efficient health care system. The committee's ultimate goal was to improve patient care and health care outcomes.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has continued the Future of Nursing Initiative by partnering with AARP to facilitate a national campaign to encourage the adoption of the recommendations, and as stakeholders in the nursing and policy communities feel the need, come up with additional recommendations or priority areas on which to

work. We will continue to raise the notion of the value to society of investing in a strong, well-educated, and empowered nursing workforce. Partners in this campaign include leaders from government, business, policy, academia, medicine, and of course, nursing. A National Summit on Advancing Health through Nursing was held in Washington, DC, at the end of November 2010, to mark the official start of the campaign.

The IOM committee working on the report was heavily influenced by the best thinking of those who study and practice nursing, including authors of the articles reprinted in *The Nursing Profession: Development, Challenges, and Opportunities*. I can think of no better place for those who are interested in or touched by nursing to gain an understanding of the history of the current issues facing the nursing profession than this anthology. It is my sincere hope that readers of this book will be inspired by the authors—both past and present—who influenced the field.

Together, *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health* report and *The Nursing Profession: Development, Challenges, and Opportunities* lay the groundwork for understanding where the field has been, where it stands currently, and where it needs to go in the future in order to address the issues facing nursing and improve the health of all Americans.

## **NOTE**

1. <http://www.iom.edu/Reports/2010/The-Future-of-Nursing-Leading-Change-Advancing-Health.aspx>

# ***EDITORS' INTRODUCTION***

**DIANA J. MASON, STEPHEN L. ISAACS, AND  
DAVID C. COLBY**

This book is designed to be a resource for those who are interested in or touched by nursing. We have tried to capture the field in a single volume and to share the best thinking of those who study and practice it. Readers—whether researchers or practitioners, foundation or government officials, students, or simply laypeople interested in nursing—should use this volume to gain a better understanding of the nursing profession and the issues with which those in the field and related fields are grappling.

An initial challenge for the editors was determining how to present the wealth of information in an engaging, readable way—one that would satisfy both those deeply knowledgeable in the field as well as those less familiar with nursing. This challenge was relatively easy to overcome because *The Nursing Profession: Development, Challenges, and Opportunities* is the fifth volume in a series whose format, according to the reviews, appears to be working. We adopted that format, one that consists of a comprehensive review article, followed by reprints of the twenty-four or so most influential or important articles in the field.

Finding a knowledgeable, highly respected expert on nursing—one who is a good writer to boot—to do a comprehensive review of the field presented a second challenge. Fortunately, one of us—Diana Mason—met all of the requisites, and she has written the lead chapter, which covers the field in its entirety (with the exception of the specifics of clinical nursing). Among the topics that Dr. Mason covers are:

- The history of nursing
- The nursing profession
- Current issues and challenges, including the nursing shortage, educating and training nurses, utilizing advanced practice nurses to their fullest, quality and cost, long-term care, community-based care, gender and power, and new areas for nursing
- A vision for the future

The most daunting challenge, not surprisingly, turned out to be selecting the articles or book chapters for reprint. How to choose twenty-four that represent the most important or influential in a field with such an extensive, high-quality literature? As a first step, we asked more than thirty experts for their top picks. From their suggestions, plus those gleaned from our own experience and literature reviews, we compiled an initial list of roughly 200 articles or book chapters that were potential reprint candidates.

The three editors discussed each of the articles and winnowed the list gradually. We wanted to be sure to include pieces that were of historical importance (such as a selection from Florence Nightingale's *Notes on Nursing* and the *Goldmark Report*), that influenced the field (such as Mary Mundinger's article on nurse practitioners in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* and Linda Aiken's article, also in *JAMA*, on hospital nursing), that captured basic aspects of the profession (such as Susan Reverby's article on womanhood and nursing and Claire Fagin and Donna Diers' short commentary, *Nursing as Metaphor*), and that synthesized issues in a clear and compelling manner (for example, the articles by Peter Buerhaus and colleagues on the nursing shortage and by Connie Mullinex and Dawn Bucholtz on nurse practitioners). We organized the reprints by topic, roughly following the major themes presented in Mason's review chapter and

tried, though with only partial success, to strike an equitable balance in the number of reprints within each category.

We realize that many worthy pieces are not included in the twenty-four that are reprinted in the book. It is likely that another team of editors would have come up with a somewhat different list of reprints. We believe, however, that the final list represents a fair sample of the most important and influential articles in the nursing field.

As Risa Lavizzo-Mourey observed in her foreword, this book is designed in part to complement the report by the Institute of Medicine on the future of nursing. In that regard, we are honored to have a preface by Susan Hassmiller, the executive director of the IOM's Initiative on the Future of Nursing, and an afterword by Donna Shalala and Linda Burnes Bolton, the chair and vice chair of IOM committee that prepared the report.

With the passage of Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act in 2010 and its implications for the way health services are delivered, the condition of nursing in our nation will be more important than ever. The combination of the IOM report and this book will, we hope, promote greater understanding of the nursing field; educate the nursing, health care, student, and policy communities, as well as the interested public; and help inform a nursing agenda that will lead to improving the health and well-being of all Americans.



# ***ACKNOWLEDGMENTS***

We are particularly grateful to David Keepnews for his in-depth, detailed reviews of two drafts of the opening chapter to the book. He also recommended writings for us to consider, as did the following people: Patricia Archbold, Geraldine “Polly” Bednash, Patricia Benner, Amy Berman, Peter Buerhaus, Mary Chaffee, Sally Cohen, Donna Diers, Claire Fagin, Patty Franklin, Kristine Gebbie, Catherine Gilliss, Charlene Harrington, Susan Hassmiller, Maureen “Shawn” Kennedy, Christine Kovner, Ellen Kurtzman, Afaf Meleis, Mathy Mezey, Mary Naylor, Susan Reinhard, Marla Salmon, Ellen Sanders, Nancy Sharp, Julie Sochalski, Virginia Tilden, Marita Titler, Antonia Villarruel, Colleen Conway-Welch, and Patricia Yoder-Wise. The final decision on which articles to reprint was made solely by the editors, taking into consideration the guidance of these experts.

At the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, we wish to acknowledge David Morse and Fred Mann for their wise counsel, Sarah Pickell for her research and editorial assistance, Mary Beth Kren for locating source materials, Rose Littman for facilitating communications among the editors, Hope Woodhead and Sherry DeMarchi for overseeing the book’s distribution, Mimi Turi for managing the budget and contract arrangements, and Risa Lavizzo-Mourey for her support and guidance.

We also recognize the work of Shirley Tiangsing in translating printed text of the reprints into an electronic format.

Elizabeth Dawson, research and editorial director at Health Policy Associates, did outstanding work in conducting research, overseeing the production process, proofreading, and resolving with great aplomb all of the problems that arose. We are very appreciative of her efforts.

*DJM, SLI, DCC*

# ***REVIEW OF THE NURSING FIELD***

## **An Original Article**

Diana J. Mason, "The Nursing Profession: Development, Challenges, and Opportunities"

# ***THE NURSING PROFESSION: DEVELOPMENT, CHALLENGES, AND OPPORTUNITIES***

**DIANA J. MASON**

## ***CHAPTER CONTENTS***

- A Brief History of Nursing
  - The Beginnings of Modern Nursing
  - The Professionalization of Nursing
  - War and the Development of Nursing
  - Modern Nursing: Education, Specialization, and Certification
- The Nursing Profession
  - Defining Nursing
  - The Nursing Workforce
  - Nurses' Employment: Where Nurses Work (and What They Do)
  - Organized Nursing
  - Nursing Research
- Current Issues and Challenges
  - The Nursing Shortage
  - Building an Educated Workforce to Meet Contemporary and Future Needs
  - Full Utilization of Advanced Practice Registered Nurses
  - Quality and Costs in Acute Care
  - Long-Term Care
  - Community-Based Care
  - Gender and Power

- Opportunities: A Vision for the Future
  - Innovative Models of Care
  - Ensuring that the Nation Fully Utilizes Its Nursing Workforce

Nursing has a long and important legacy. Nurses have served as advocates for a better, safer, more humanistic health care system, and for public policies that promote the health of the nation throughout the profession's history.

- Lillian Wald in 1893 founded the Henry Street Settlement that provided home care to New York City's poor immigrants on the Lower East Side of Manhattan when no other providers would serve them.<sup>1</sup>
- Margaret Sanger was a public health nurse whose fight for the reproductive rights of women from 1916, when she established the nation's first birth control clinic, to her death in 1966 changed the nation's policies on access to birth control information and services.<sup>2</sup>
- Ruth Watson Lubic, the first nurse to receive the John A. and Catherine D. MacArthur Foundation's "Genius Award," has spent the last half century as a leader in reframing childbearing as a "normal" life experience rather than a disease. She founded one of the first freestanding, nurse-midwife-run childbearing centers in the nation and spread her model to the South Bronx and Washington, D.C., where she has improved outcomes for mothers and babies.
- Connie Hill is a pediatric nurse manager on a respiratory unit at Chicago's Children's Hospital, where she refused to accept the notion that her urban community could not muster the resources to support long-term ventilator-dependent children and their families after hospital discharge. She formed a coalition of stakeholders to bring about the policy, system, and financial changes needed to accomplish this.<sup>3</sup>

The legacy of nurses such as these continues to be enriched by those who follow their example and refuse to be bound by others' views of their profession or of women's place in society and the health care system. Nurses are expert clinicians, researcher-scientists, policymakers, chief executive officers of hospitals and their own organizations, primary care providers, independent practitioners, deans of schools of nursing in research-intensive universities, heads of foundations, and leaders in every segment of society. Every day, nurses innovate to keep people alive, prevent pressure ulcers and infections, reduce pain and suffering, and ease the transition from life to death. They screen schoolchildren's ability to see and hear, teach older adults and their family caregivers how to manage illnesses such as congestive heart failure, provide outreach to the homeless, counsel those with mental illness, and are otherwise present during some of the most intense, joyous, painful, difficult, and profound times of people's lives.

Yet nurses face significant barriers to providing the care that people need, and they are often excluded from policymaking in workplaces, boardrooms, and government entities. Legal and regulatory barriers to the full utilization of nurses persist, limiting the nation's ability to use its health care workforce efficiently and effectively. Other barriers are not specific to nurses but impede them from fully using their expertise. For example, nurses are skilled in managing chronic illness and coordinating care, but most payers do not cover these services.

Most policy discussions about nursing have focused on nursing shortage—a focus that overlooks the innovations and perspectives nurses can offer to improve both the way health care is delivered and the overall well-being of Americans. Certainly, the shortage is a complex problem of supply and demand. With the doubling of the nursing workforce over the past 25 years, it has become clear that