

## WONL Advocacy Update: Advancing Nursing Practice & Education in Wisconsin

WONL continues to partner with the **Wisconsin Nurses Association (WNA)**, **Wisconsin Hospital Association (WHA)**, **Wisconsin Center for Nursing (WCN)**, and our academic partners through **ANEW** to advance policy solutions that strengthen nursing practice, education, and Wisconsin's healthcare workforce.

### APRN Modernization Act Takes Effect September 1

September marks an important milestone for nursing in Wisconsin as the **APRN Modernization Act (2025 Wisconsin Act 17)** takes effect **September 1, 2026**, following years of advocacy and collaboration across our state.



The new law establishes APRN licensure for four nationally recognized roles—**Nurse Practitioner (NP)**, **Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA)**, **Certified Nurse Midwife (CNM)**, and **Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS)**. Qualified APRNs who complete **3,840 hours of advanced practice experience over at least 24 months** may become eligible for independent practice as outlined in Wisconsin law.

For nurse leaders, implementation means working across our organizations to review **credentialing and privileging, HR and EHR systems, job descriptions, organizational policies, and education of clinical teams**, while supporting current APNPs through the transition.

WONL has proudly supported APRN modernization and continues to work closely with our nursing and healthcare partners as implementation moves forward. This historic legislation provides an important opportunity to strengthen APRN practice, expand access to high-quality care, and address workforce needs across Wisconsin.

**Questions about implementation?** Nurse leaders and APRNs are encouraged to use the **Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS)** as the official source for licensure, transition requirements, applications, and regulatory updates.

### BSN-Prepared Nurses: Expanding Wisconsin's Clinical Faculty Pipeline

Another exciting advancement addresses one of the most significant barriers to educating the next generation of nurses: **the nursing faculty shortage**.

A new Wisconsin emergency rule now allows **qualified BSN-prepared registered nurses to serve as clinical instructors for college-level nursing students**. This creates an important pathway for experienced bedside nurses to bring their clinical expertise directly into nursing education while helping schools expand their capacity to educate future nurses.

There are important qualifications. BSN-prepared nurses teaching under the new rule must have an **active Wisconsin RN license and at least two years of clinical experience in the area they will teach**. They must also either be **actively enrolled in a graduate health program or hold a national certification in their clinical specialty**, and they will teach under the supervision of a nurse who meets the traditional faculty requirements.

The change applies to **hands-on clinical education**; classroom-based nursing courses will continue to be taught by nurses who meet graduate-degree requirements.

Why does this matter? Nursing schools across Wisconsin have qualified students who want to enter the profession but face limited program capacity, in part because of nursing faculty shortages. By tapping into the expertise of qualified BSN-prepared nurses already practicing in our healthcare organizations, we can **expand the clinical faculty pipeline, strengthen academic-clinical partnerships, create professional development opportunities for nurses, and potentially increase nursing student capacity**.

For nurse leaders, this creates an opportunity to identify experienced nurses within our organizations who have both the clinical expertise and passion for developing the next generation. Imagine the possibilities when **health systems, schools of nursing, and nursing organizations work together to connect great clinical nurses with students who need great clinical teachers**.

WONL is proud to collaborate with **WHA, WNA, WCN, and ANEW** in advancing solutions to Wisconsin's nursing workforce and education challenges. This collaboration demonstrates the power of bringing together **nurse leaders, educators, workforce experts, healthcare organizations, and professional nursing organizations** around a shared goal.

Together, the **APRN Modernization Act and expansion of the BSN clinical faculty pathway** represent meaningful progress—and demonstrate what is possible when Wisconsin nurses and nurse leaders have a strong, collaborative voice in shaping the future of our profession.

#### **Resources:**

Wisconsin DSPS — APRN Information & Implementation

Wisconsin Center for Nursing — Nursing Workforce & Education Resources

WPR — Wisconsin BSN Clinical Teaching Pathway