

Impact of Developing Advocacy Competence in Nurses

Susan Mullaney, DNP, APRN, GNP-BC, GS-S, FAANP

Purpose

This study examined the **impact** of introducing an advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) **advocacy competence model** and supportive developmental activities to **advance health policy knowledge** and advocacy efforts.

Significance

Nurse leaders have long recognized the need for nurses to take a **more active role** in **health policy** and **advocacy** (Hernandez, 2020) yet studies demonstrate low engagement of APRNs in political activism (Kung & Rudner & Lugo, 2015).

Methods

- A novice to expert competence model was developed and piloted based upon the work of Ellenbecker, et.al. (2017) and included three pathways; novice, intermediate and expert.
- The creation of **collaboration portal** fostered the development of an advocacy network to share policy knowledge and advocacy opportunities.
- **40 APRNs** participated and process/outcome measures were tracked.

References

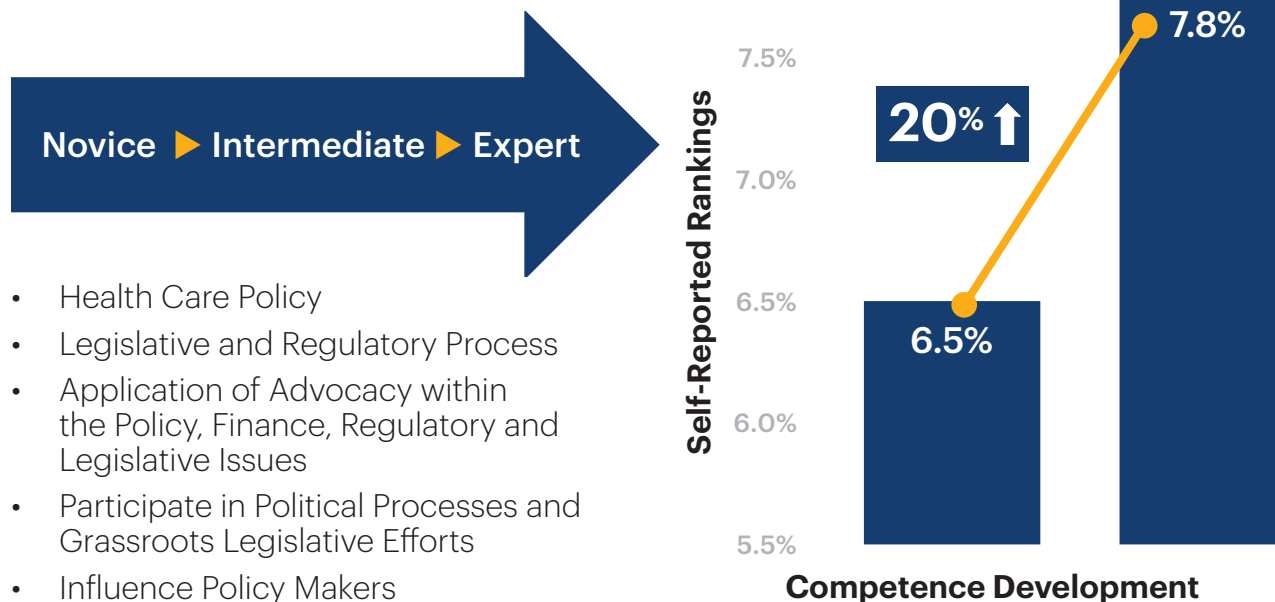
- Ellenbecker CH, Fawcett J, Jones EJ, Mahoney D, Rowlands B, Waddell A. (2017). A Staged Approach to Educating Nurses in Health Policy. Policy Politics Nursing Practice,18(1):44-56. doi: 10.1177/1527154417709254. Epub 2017 May 15. PMID: 28558520.
- Hernandez, A. (2020). "Health policy in nursing education". American Nurse, 15(1).
- Kung, Y.M., Rudner, N.R., & Lugo (2015). Political advocacy and practice barriers: A survey of Florida APRNs. Journal of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners, 27. 146-151.

Results

Competence

- Across the **40** APRNs, **52** pathways were completed.
- The average perceived change in competence before pathway completion and after was a **20%** increase (35% response rate).

Building Your Advocacy Competence Model



- Health Care Policy
- Legislative and Regulatory Process
- Application of Advocacy within the Policy, Finance, Regulatory and Legislative Issues
- Participate in Political Processes and Grassroots Legislative Efforts
- Influence Policy Makers

Collaboration Portal

- The collaboration portal generated **530** followers, **361** unique visitors, more than **2,000** page views and **262** blog posts during the last 18 months.

Advocacy Efforts

- As a result of these efforts, **10** APRNs have participated in **17** state or federal advocacy efforts.

Policy Implications

- **APRNs** often state the lack of knowledge, skill and ability as the reasons they do not participate in advocacy efforts and influence policy.
- This results in a critical **competence gap**.
- This pilot study demonstrated a **positive outcome** by focusing on advocacy **core competencies** and related development activities to **promote APRN confidence and engagement** in advocacy efforts.

Future Opportunities

- Expand adoption of model for APRNs and beyond
- Add/Update educational resources
- Enhance dialogue on collaboration portal
- Create educational podcasts on health policy and advocacy