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Interprofessional Education and Practice Implications of the Institute of Medicine Future of Nursing Report

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The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health,¹ released by the Institute of Medicine (IOM) on October 5, 2010, is the latest in a series of reports that have had a significant impact on creating positive change to improve health care in the United States. The report provides a vision of a future health care system that would make high-quality care accessible to all, promote wellness and disease prevention, reliably improve health outcomes, and provide compassionate care throughout a person's lifespan.² This report, in concert with the provisions of the Affordable Care Act, must act as a catalyst for all health professions to find significant opportunities for collaboration and the impetus to play to each of our strengths to advance quality health care for all citizens.

While there are many aspects of this action-oriented report that will be of interest to all health professionals, the recommendations most relevant to interprofessional education and practice are linked to the third of the report's four key messages: Nurses should be full partners with physicians and other health professionals in redesigning health care in the United States.

The recommendations include:

- Schools of nursing, in collaboration with other health professional schools, should design and implement early and continuous interprofessional collaboration through joint classroom and clinical training opportunities.
- All health care organizations and schools of nursing should foster a culture of lifelong learning and provide resources for interprofessional continuing competency programs.

On November 30 and December 1, 2010, the IOM and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation convened the National Summit on Advancing Health Through Nursing in Washington, DC, to launch the initiative's implementation phase. Policy makers, national, state, and local government leaders, payers, health care researchers, executives and professionals – including nurses and others – as well as licensing bodies, educational institutions, and consumer advocacy organizations were in attendance.² Working together, these many diverse parties will help ensure that the health care system provides seamless, affordable, quality care that is accessible to all and leads to improved health. Meaningful interprofessional education and practice is essential for success. We all must participate!

References

1. Institute of Medicine. *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press; 2010.
2. Hassmiller SB. An 'action-oriented blueprint' for the future of nursing. *American Journal of Nursing*. 2010;110(12):7.