

Capitation Bill Reintroduced

On July 28, 2005, Representatives Nita Lowey (D-NY) reintroduced H.R.3569, the ***Nurse Education, Expansion and Development (NEED) Act of 2005***. Originally introduced during the 108th Congress, H.R.3569 requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services to award a grant to each eligible school of nursing to increase the number of nursing faculty and students at the school. The bill has eighteen co-sponsors and has been referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce of consideration.

H.R.3569 would require each school to formulate and implement a plan to accomplish at least two of the following goals: (1) establish or significantly expand an accelerated baccalaureate degree nursing program designed to graduate new nurses in 12 to 18 months; (2) establish cooperative interdisciplinary training between schools of nursing and other specified health related fields; (3) increase admissions, enrollment, and retention of qualified individuals who are financially disadvantaged;

(4) increase enrollment of minority and diverse student populations; (5) increase enrollment of new graduate baccalaureate nursing students in graduate programs that educate nurse faculty members; (6) develop post-baccalaureate residency programs to prepare nurses for practice in specialty areas where nursing shortages are more severe; and (7) increase integration of geriatric content into the core curriculum.

The ***Need Act*** also instructs the Government Accountability Office to conduct a study on ways to increase participation in the nurse faculty profession. The report must be submitted to Congress not later than one year after the date of enactment of the bill. The report is to include: (1) a discussion of the master's degree and doctoral degree programs that are successful in placing graduates as faculty in schools of nursing; and (2) an examination of compensation disparities throughout the nursing profession and between higher education instructional faculty generally and higher education instructional nursing faculty.

Amendment Expands Loan Relief

Before Congress left for its August recess, Representatives Jon Porter (R-NV) and Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY) offered a successful amendment expanding an existing loan forgiveness program for childcare providers and K-12 teachers to include nurse faculty, nurses, speech-language pathologists and early childhood educators. Introduced during subcommittee consideration of the ***College Access and Opportunity Act of 2005*** (H.R.609), the amendment also designates the above occupations as areas of national need and provides for the repayment of up to \$5,000 in educational loans for service in these fields.

The Committee on Education and the Workforce subsequently passed the bill which will go to the full House for consideration.