

Nurse Licensure Compact Update

Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC)

The mutual recognition model of nurse licensure allows a nurse to have one license (in his or her state of residency) and to practice in other states (both physically and electronically), subject to each state's practice laws and regulations. Under mutual recognition, a nurse may practice across state lines unless otherwise restricted. In order to achieve mutual recognition, each state must enact legislation or regulation authorizing the Nurse Licensure Compact. States entering the compact also adopt administrative rules and regulations for implementation of the compact. Once the compact is enacted, each compact state designates a Nurse Licensure Compact Administrator to facilitate the exchange of information between the states relating to compact nurse licensure and regulation. On January 10, 2000, the Nurse Licensure Compact Administrators (NLCA) were organized to protect the public's health and safety by promoting compliance with the laws governing the practice of nursing in each party state through the mutual recognition of party state licenses. The Executive Director of the Texas Board of Nursing serves as the Compact Administrator for Texas.

NLCA Meetings

The Nurse Licensure Compact Administrators (NLCA) meet via teleconference once every other month and face to face twice a year.

The NLCA Executive Committee consists of the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary-Treasurer, two Committee Members-at-Large, and an APRN Administrator Member-at-Large. Katherine Thomas serves on the Executive Committee as the APRN Administrator at Large. Texas is one of two states to have adopted the APRN Compact but it will be a few years before the states are ready to implement this more complex Compact.

At recent meetings, the Administrators have continued to review/revise the Frequently Asked Questions document, the Mentor Evaluation Process, the Web Site, and the Discipline procedures. Model Rules adopted at the August 2008 meeting are being published and adopted by all Compact states; three states have already adopted these rules and adoption of these rules in Texas are on the Board's agenda under item 6.2.

The next meeting of the NLCA-EXEC will be a conference call on Monday, April 13, 2009.

The National Governor's Association

National Governors Association (NGA), NGA E-Health report has been released and one of the strategic directives presented in this report was for Governors to encourage boards of nursing to implement the Compact.

NCSBN-NLCA Relationship

NCSBN is currently revisiting the Uniform Core Licensure Requirements (UCLR) to consider revision. The Compact states have worked to adopt the current UCLR and will do so with any newly adopted standards. In addition, non Compact (Single State Licensure) states have felt unsupported and would like for the Council to address issues of mutual concern to both Compact and Single State Licensure States such as reciprocity and disaster relief. To that end the BOD is developing a new committee to focus on common issues, important to all boards regardless of the type of licensure model, related to the mobility of nurses.

At the last Board meeting I reported that the NCSBN and NLCA were discussing their ongoing relationship. Currently the NCSBN serves as the Secretariat for the NLCA. This includes a part time secretarial position. Because of the growing need for support, the NLCA approached the NCSBN Board of Directors to request additional staff support to assure the Compact states are compliant with the terms of the Compact. This staff person is contemplated to be a nurse with administrative and research experience. At its February 11-13, 2009 meeting, the NCSBN Board of Directors approved this request.

Participating States

The Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC) has now been implemented in twenty-three states: Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Delaware, Idaho, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Mexico, New Hampshire, North Carolina, North Dakota, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia and Wisconsin. Kentucky's bill was implemented on June 1, 2007.

For future reference on the Nurse Licensure Compact, refer to the National Council of State Boards of Nursing web site at:

<https://www.ncsbn.org/156.htm>

Texas Compact Statute and Rules

The Texas NLC Statute can be found at

<http://www.bon.state.tx.us/nursinglaw/npa2.html#4-001>

The Texas Administrative Rules for the Compact can be found at this page by clicking on BON Rules and Regulations and navigating to Chapter 220.

<http://www.bon.state.tx.us/nursinglaw/rr.html>