

**BYLAWS OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA HEALTH SYSTEM
PROFESSIONAL NURSING STAFF ORGANIZATION**

PREAMBLE

Whereas, the University of Virginia Health System is an integral part of the University of Virginia which is a public corporation organized under the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia; and,

Whereas, under the laws and regulations of the Commonwealth of Virginia, nursing has a scope of practice which is the responsibility of professional nurses; and,

Whereas, each nurse within the Health System has responsibility for his/her individual nursing practice; collectively, members of the professional nursing staff hold aggregate accountability for the quality of nursing care provided within the institution; and,

Whereas, the discipline of nursing intends to establish and uphold its commitment to nursing excellence in accordance with the ANA Code for Nurses and the institutional core values of respect, integrity, stewardship and excellence; and,

Whereas, an organizational framework provides a mechanism for the discipline of nursing to establish and uphold its values and standards subject to the authority of the Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) and Clinical Staff Executive Committee of the Health System;

Therefore, the nurses of the professional nursing staff of the University of Virginia Health System, as defined herein, hereby organize themselves into the Professional Nursing Staff Organization (PNSO).

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of the organization shall be the Professional Nursing Staff Organization (PNSO) of the University of Virginia Health System.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

The purpose of the PNSO is to be the mechanism for the discipline of nursing to establish, uphold and communicate its values and standards within the University of Virginia Health System.

Specifically, the purposes of the PNSO are as follows:

1. **Governance** - The PNSO shall provide the structure for establishing standards of nursing practice and professional advancement throughout the University of Virginia Health System.
2. **Clinical Practice** - The PNSO shall promote excellence in nursing practice by establishing, upholding and advancing clinical practice in all clinical settings;
3. **Professional Development** - The PNSO shall promote the ongoing development of members through education, mentorship, peer review and recognition opportunities; and
4. **Research** - The PNSO shall promote knowledge acquisition through the conduct, evaluation, application, and dissemination of nursing research.
5. **Nursing Quality**- The PNSO shall promote a commitment to quality through case review, monitoring of outcomes data and ongoing improvements.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERS

Section 1 **Membership**

Membership in this organization shall include all registered nurses employed by the medical center, all nursing faculty in the School of Nursing and all registered nurses employed by the School of Medicine. Participation in the organization is a professional responsibility.

Section 2 **Responsibilities and rights of members**

Members:

- (1) Are individually accountable for their nursing practice.
- (2) Utilize the mechanisms of the organization to address nursing matters.
- (3) Are responsible for being informed about the actions and activities of the PNSO.
- (4) May nominate candidates for office in the PNSO.
- (5) May vote in the annual election.
- (6) May participate in activities of the organization.

ARTICLE IV- OFFICERS

Section 1 **Elected Officers**

The elected officers of the PNSO shall be President and President-elect.

- (1) The **President** shall serve for a term of one year. The President-elect shall serve a term of one year as President-elect succeeding to the office of President at the end of that year. The term of office shall begin on January 1. Officers shall serve until their successors take office.
- (2) The **President-elect** shall fill a vacancy in the office of President. A vacancy in the office of President-elect shall be filled at the discretion of the Executive Committee to serve until a successor is elected.
- (3) The president shall be known as **Immediate Past-President** after the completion of their presidential term, and shall serve in this capacity for the time period of one year.

Section 2 **Appointed Officers**

Chief Nursing Officer - The Chief Nursing Officer (CNO), by administrative appointment, holds authority and responsibility for the practice of nursing within the University of Virginia Health System.

Dean of the School of Nursing - The Dean of the School of Nursing (the Dean), by appointment of the University of Virginia Board of Visitors, holds authority and responsibility for the academic and clinical preparation of nurses graduating from the University of Virginia School of Nursing.

Communication Officer

The Director of Nursing Governance Programs shall serve as the communication officer for nurses of the UVA Health System.

Chairpersons of Standing Committees

- (1) Chairpersons of the Standing Committees of the PNSO shall be appointed annually by the Executive Committee.
- (2) The term of appointment shall be one year beginning on January 1. Chairpersons may be re-appointed for more than one term.
- (3) If the chairperson is not a current cabinet member, said person will be afforded ex-officio status to the cabinet during tenure as chair.

Additional committee chairpersons and officers may be nominated by the Executive Committee, and approved by a majority vote of the cabinet membership, to accomplish the work of the organization.

Section 3 - Nominations and Elections

- (1) The Nominating Committee shall be composed of 5 PNSO members, 4 shall be elected from the membership and one shall be a past-President of the Professional Nursing Staff.
 - (a) A past-President shall be appointed by the Cabinet to serve a one-year term as chairperson.
 - (b) The term of service for remaining committee members shall be two years with two members elected each year.
 - (c) Elected members of the committee shall be chosen by the membership annually during balloting for president-elect.
 - (d) No member may serve more than two consecutive terms.
 - (e) In the event that an elected position becomes vacant during a term, the Cabinet may appoint an interim replacement on behalf of the PNSO membership, until the next election is held.
- (2) The Committee shall solicit nominations and prepare a ballot with qualified candidates for the office of President-elect and Nominating Committee. The slate shall be published on or before September 15, via electronic and paper announcements.
- (3) The Committee shall solicit and prepare a list of potential Cabinet members and shall submit these recommendations to the incoming Executive Committee by November 15.
- (4) To be eligible to serve as President a member must be a nursing leader and active member of the PNSO with Clinical Career Ladder panel experience. A President-elect may obtain Clinical Career Ladder panel experience while concurrently fulfilling the President-elect role. PNSO Present Elect will serve on the panel at the level of their practice (i.e. President Elect who is a clinician III or IV will serve on a Clinician III/IV panel; and a President Elect who is an APN will serve on the APN Career Ladder Panel).
- (5) No elected officer shall be eligible to serve more than 2 consecutive terms in the same office.
- (6) Elections will be held annually beginning in October; balloting will be conducted for a minimum of 15 days, to include at least two full weekends, to facilitate voting opportunities for all shifts.
- (7) The Cabinet shall elect two tellers at the first Cabinet meeting following September 30 to count and certify the results of the vote. Tellers may not be elected officers or members of the Nominating Committee.
- (8) The Chair of the Nominating Committee will abstain from voting. In the event of a tie, the Chair will cast the deciding vote.

ARTICLE V - DUTIES OF OFFICERS

All officers shall perform the duties prescribed by these bylaws and such other duties applicable to the offices as prescribed by the adopted parliamentary authority.

Section 1 - Duties of the President

The President shall:

- (1) Serve as leader and official representative of the PNSO.
- (2) Lead the PNSO in achieving the purposes of the organization.
- (3) Lead strategic planning of the PNSO.
- (4) Preside over meetings of the membership, the nursing leadership, the Cabinet, and other groups as required to accomplish the work of the PNSO.
- (5) Advise the Health System on matters affecting the practice of nursing in consultation with the Cabinet.
- (6) Assure processes for ongoing innovation and evaluation of nursing care delivery models.
- (7) Facilitate the conduct, dissemination, and utilization of research applicable to nursing and health care delivery systems.
- (8) Receive and consider professional nursing concerns.
- (9) Be an ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominating Committee.

Section 2 - Duties of the President-elect

The President-elect shall:

- (1) Succeed to the office of President after one year.
- (2) Assume the duties of President upon request of the President or in the event the President is unable to serve.
- (3) Assist the President in the work of the PNSO.
- (4) Receive and consider professional nursing concerns.
- (5) Co-chair the Congress Planning Committee.

Section 3 - Duties of appointed officers**The CNO**, in collaboration with the PNSO, shall:

- (1) Plan, implement, and evaluate the practice of nursing through the mechanisms of the PNSO.
- (2) Procure and provide administrative support for the activities of the PNSO.
- (3) Receive and consider professional nursing concerns.
- (4) Provide leadership in the determination of clinical and administrative goals for professional nursing in the UVA Health System.
- (5) Participate in the determination of functions and processes to achieve clinical and administrative goals.

The Dean of the School of Nursing shall:

- (1) Collaborate with the PNSO on nursing matters.
- (2) Be ex-officio a member of the Executive Committee.
- (3) Be ex-officio a member of the Cabinet.

The Communication Officer (or their **designee**) shall:

- (1) Serve as communication coordinator for the President, the Executive Committee, Cabinet and the PNSO by:
 - (a) Establishing and maintaining mechanisms for informing the PNSO membership of meetings, activities and actions of the organization.
 - (b) Disseminating information about the PNSO meetings, activities and actions.
- (2) Collaborate with the recording secretary to maintain an accurate record and archive of the business of the PNSO.
 - (a) A recording secretary shall:
 - i. Record, distribute and archive approved minutes of the meetings of the PNSO.
 - ii. Maintain the official membership roster of the PNSO.
 - iii. Serve as staff support for Cabinet and other activities of the PNSO.
- (3) Fulfill such other duties as prescribed for a Secretary in the adopted parliamentary authority.

Section 3. The **Immediate Past-President** shall:

- (1) Chair the Nominating Committee.
- (2) Serve on the Executive Committee.
- (3) Serve on the Congress Planning Committee.
- (4) Provide continuity for ongoing initiatives

ARTICLE VI – MEETINGS _____Section 1 - **PNSO Assembly**

- (1) A PNSO Assembly shall be held at least annually, as an open forum for all registered nurses within the Health System. The purpose of the meeting will be to provide an opportunity for registered nurses to participate in discussions concerning nursing matters and to recognize achievements and accomplishments of PNSO members.

- (2) The dates for the Assemblies will be established by the Executive Committee in January for the current year, and publicized at least three months prior to the Assembly.
- (3) The PNSO Cabinet shall establish the agenda for the Assembly to include reports to the membership by the President and CNO on nursing matters and a period of time for open discussion. The agenda will be publicized two weeks prior to the meeting.

Section 2 - PNSO Leadership Forum

- (1) The PNSO Leadership Forum (the Forum) shall be held at least annually as a meeting for clinical, administrative and educational nurse leaders within the University of Virginia Health System. The purpose of the Forum is for discussion and collaboration regarding nursing issues. Participants at the Forum will collaborate with the Cabinet to advance the work of the nursing organization or to address specific nursing issues.
- (2) The dates for the Forums will be established by the Executive Committee in January for the current year and publicized at least three months prior to the meetings.
- (3) The PNSO Cabinet shall establish the agenda for the Forum and publicize it at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

Section 3 - PNSO Congress

The PNSO Congress will be convened with representation from care-sites throughout the Health System in the last quarter of each calendar year.

- (1) The purpose of the Congress shall be to identify and establish priorities for the nursing organization, to provide a mechanism for the membership to share and receive information, and to recognize and celebrate contributions of members. The Cabinet sets and publicizes the agenda for the Congress at least 2 weeks prior to the meeting via electronic and paper announcements.
- (2) A Congress planning committee will be comprised of the President-elect and a frontline Clinician II or III as co-chairs, the Immediate Past President, delegates from the previous year, and others chosen by the chairs. A minimum of fifty percent of the planning committee will be frontline patient caregivers.
- (3) Members elect delegates for a two-year term from their care-sites in October, and new delegate terms will begin January 1. The Congress Planning Committee will notify Cabinet of the selections no later than November 15th.
- (4) The representatives serve as liaisons for the membership of their care sites. The delegates are expected to attend the Congress and report back to the care sites concerning the proceedings of the Congress and other PNSO meetings.

Section 4 - Additional meetings

- (1) Any member of the Executive Committee may call additional meetings of the PNSO as deemed necessary to accomplish the work of the organization.
- (2) Called meetings shall be for the purpose of disseminating information or seeking input on urgent matters. Notice of called meetings will be given in advance of such meeting via electronic and paper announcements and will include date, time, place, and agenda.

Section 5 – Conducting Business of Meetings

- (1) The PNSO Cabinet and any committee of the PNSO may hold a meeting by teleconference, telephone conference-call or other electronic means only if all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other at the same time. Participation of a person in a meeting by conference call or by other electronic means constitutes presence of that person at the meeting. Specific rules must be stated at the beginning of the committee meeting that specify how recognition is to be sought and the floor obtained during such meetings. These specific rules will be based on the particular capabilities of the electronic means being used.

ARTICLE VII - PNSO CABINET

The PNSO Cabinet shall conduct the business of the PNSO and perform such other duties as specified in these bylaws. None of its actions shall conflict with the policies of the University of Virginia Health System.

Section 1 - Cabinet Membership

- (1) The PNSO Cabinet shall be composed of the Executive Committee and at least five additional voting members appointed by the Executive Committee from the PNSO membership roster. Consideration shall be given to recommendations brought forth by the Nominating Committee.
- (2) Each appointed Cabinet member shall be an officer of the organization, serve a term of one year and is eligible for re-appointment. A member may resign when circumstances prevent the member from fulfilling his/her duties. A member may be removed from the Cabinet upon two-thirds vote of the voting membership of the Cabinet. Any vacancy occurring among the appointed members of the Cabinet may be filled by appointment of the President, President-elect, and CNO for the balance of the vacated term.
- (3) Members of the PNSO Cabinet shall:
 - (a) Participate actively in the work of the Cabinet and the PNSO,
 - (b) Consistently attend at Cabinet meetings,
 - (c) Provide consistent liaison with assigned area,
 - (d) Lead nursing initiatives as directed by the Cabinet,
 - (e) Adhere to established group norms of the Cabinet.
- (4) Ad hoc members may be appointed by the Executive Committee for a term not to exceed one year as needed to provide expertise regarding specific issues of relevance to the work of the PNSO. Ad hoc members will not be voting members of the Cabinet and may be re-appointed for additional terms.
- (5) The Dean of the School of Nursing shall be ex-officio a member of the Cabinet.

Section 2 - Meetings of the PNSO Cabinet

- (1) Meetings shall be held no less than monthly. The Executive Committee will establish the meeting schedule in January for the calendar year. The President shall chair all meetings of the Cabinet. The President-elect shall chair the meetings in the absence of the President.
- (2) Special meetings of the Cabinet may be held upon the call of the President or upon written request of a majority of members of the Cabinet.
- (3) A quorum shall include the President or President-elect (or their assigned designee) and a majority of the voting members of the Cabinet.
- (4) Executive Session – If a matter of great sensitivity is to be discussed, a closed meeting of the Cabinet called “executive session” may be called by the President.

Section 3 - Duties of the PNSO Cabinet

The Cabinet shall:

- (1) Be the governing body of the PNSO.
- (2) Fulfill the purposes of the PNSO.
- (3) Establish, evaluate, and revise mechanisms to assure the achievement of the purposes of the PNSO.
- (4) Establish guidelines, procedures and other standards for the professional practice of nursing within the Health System.
- (5) Establish and implement standards for nursing orientation, competency, inservice and continuing education outcomes.
- (6) Receive and consider professional nursing concerns from members of the PNSO.
- (7) Advise the Health System leadership on matters affecting the practice of nursing.

- (8) Appoint SON committee representatives in accordance with the University of Virginia School of Nursing Faculty Organization Bylaws.
- (9) Approve sub-committee chairs nominated by the Executive Committee.
- (10) Conduct an annual review of the Bylaws of the PNSO to recommend any changes necessary to maintain the efficient and effective functioning of the organization.
- (11) Review proposed Bylaws changes submitted by any member. Report all proposed changes with recommendations to the membership.
- (12) Review activities of the PNSO for compliance with these Bylaws of the organization and advise the President concerning procedural variances.
- (13) Review Operational Guidelines every three years and as needed.

ARTICLE VIII - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee shall be composed of President, President-elect, CNO, the Immediate Past-President, The Magnet Program Manager, Administrator Workforce Development and Business, and the Director for Nursing Governance (or their designee). The current President presides over the meetings of the Executive Committee. The Dean of the School of Nursing is an ex-officio member of this committee.

Section 1- Duties of the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall:

- (1) Appoint the Communications Officer, members of the Cabinet, and Chairperson of the Standing Committees.
- (2) Nominate sub-committee chairs to the cabinet.
- (3) Utilize the mechanisms of the PNSO to achieve the purposes of the organization.
- (4) Establish the schedule and plan agendas for meetings of the PNSO;
- (5) Act on urgent nursing matters between Cabinet meetings; and
- (6) Report any action taken to the Cabinet at the next scheduled meeting of that body.

Section 2 - Meetings of the Executive Committee

The committee shall meet at least monthly and at the call of any member of the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE IX – COMMITTEES

Committees shall be established by the Cabinet, CNO or President as necessary to fulfill the purposes of the PNSO. Each committee shall include some representation from members not currently serving on Cabinet. Chairpersons of Committees, except NCCAC, are appointed by the Executive Committee.

Section 1 Standing Committees

Clinical Practice Committee - The Clinical Practice Committee is accountable to the Cabinet for guiding the development, implementation and evaluation of nursing practice guidelines, procedures, documentation and standards.

1. **Membership:** Members of the Clinical Practice Committee are appointed by the Cabinet, serve for two-year terms and may serve two terms. Exceptions to this apply to Regional Practice Committee Chairs, CPC Chair and CPC Vice-Chair. The Immediate Past-Chair will be an ex officio member for one additional year as a resource to the CPC.
2. **Duties:**
The Clinical Practice Committee shall:
 - (1) Promote evidence-based clinical practice through discovery, education and dissemination of information and research.

- (2) Review and define professional nursing practice and documentation to promote consistency across clinical settings.
- (3) Receive and consider nursing practice and professional concerns from all areas within the Health System.
- (4) Report to the Cabinet at least quarterly providing a summary of activities and bringing forward any recommendations pursuant to the purpose of the Committee or the PNSO.

Professional Development Committee - The Professional Development Committee promotes education, mentorship, and recognition opportunities for members of the PNSO.

1. **Membership:** Members of the Professional Development Committee are appointed by the Cabinet, serve two year terms and may serve more than one term.
2. **Duties:**
The Professional Development Committee shall:
 - (1) Develop and evaluate standards for nursing orientation, competency, inservice and continuing education outcomes.
 - (2) Provide guidance to orientation, competency, inservice, and continuing education programs.
 - (3) Promote the development of and participation in educational programs for nurses.
 - (4) The Committee reports to the Cabinet at least quarterly providing a summary of activities and bringing forward any recommendations pursuant to the purpose of the Committee or the PNSO.

Career Ladder Advisory Group - The Career Ladder Advisory Group (Advisory Group) has the responsibility and authority to provide coordination of the peer review process for advancement, validation, and revalidation within the Nursing Career Ladder. The Advisory Group establishes guidelines for the Clinician III/IV Career Ladder and the APN Career Ladder Panels.

- (1) **Membership:** The Career Ladder Advisory Group is composed of the chair and vice-chair of the Clinician III/IV Career Ladder Panels, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the APN Career Ladder Panel, and the Dean of the School of Nursing. The Executive Committee appoints a chair for the Advisory Group.
- (2) **Duties:**
The Career Ladder Advisory Group shall:
 1. Provide oversight for the Clinician III/IV and APN Career Ladder Panels.
 2. Publish the schedule and procedure for the advancement, validation, and revalidation processes at least six months in advance of any deadline for application for advancement, validation, or revalidation.
 3. Prepare a slate of nominees for future membership on the Panel, including recommendations for Chair and Vice-Chair of the Clinician III/IV Career Ladder Panel and Chair and Vice-Chair of the APN Career Ladder Panel, and present to Cabinet.
 4. Periodically review the criteria for advancement and recommend revisions in the criteria to the Cabinet.
 5. Report to the Cabinet at least semiannually providing a summary of activities and bringing forward any recommendations.

Magnet Recognition Steering Committee

The Magnet Recognition Steering Committee is accountable to the Cabinet for guiding the integration of international standards for excellence in professional nursing practice and shared governance.

1. **Membership:** Members of the Magnet Recognition Steering Committee are appointed by the Cabinet, serve for a two year term and may serve more than one term.
2. **Duties:** The Magnet Recognition Steering Committee shall:

- (1) Review and interpret standards of excellence as defined by the American Nurses Credentialing Center Magnet Recognition Program.
- (2) Promote innovations in nursing practice, education, research and administration that support Magnet standards.
- (3) Collect evidence and nursing outcomes data that support Magnet standards.
- (4) Guide the organization in activities to maintain and re-designate as a Magnet organization.
- (5) Lead a sub-committee of Magnet Champions.
 - (a) Magnet Champions are appointed by Nurse Managers to serve as unit liaisons responsible for understanding and disseminating Magnet standards. They are appointed for a two year term and may be reappointed.
 - (b) Magnet Champions are expected to participate in the work of the Magnet and other PNSO meetings.

Nursing Quality Committee

1. **Membership:** Members of the Nursing Quality Committee are appointed by the Cabinet, serve for two-year terms and may serve two terms.
2. **Duties: The Nursing Quality Committee shall**
 - a. Coordinate clinical peer review process for nursing focused on patient safety events referred from the Patient Safety Committee and patient care areas' nursing leadership.
 - b. Create action plans to address practice issues stemming from these reviews.
 - c. Provide oversight to Nurse Sensitive Quality Indicators Sub-committee to assure all indicators achieve a level of excellence aligned with institutional goals.

Nursing Research Mentorship Program (NRMP) - The NRMP is accountable to the Cabinet for guiding the development, implementation and evaluation of the Nursing Research Mentorship Program.

1. **Leadership:** The NRMP is lead by the Director and Assistant Director of Nursing Research
2. **Duties:** The NRMP Committee shall:
 - a. Promote evidence-based clinical practice by applying research findings, in partnership with the Clinical Practice Committee.
 - b. Assist in the dissemination of research project results throughout the health system and beyond.
 - c. Facilitate reviews of nursing research proposals that evolve separate from the NRMP as well as selected NRMP projects as identified by the Nursing Research Mentorship Program Director.
 - d. Report to the Cabinet a quarterly summary of activities and bring forward recommendations.

Section 2 - Nursing Council for Clinical and Academic Collaboration - The Nursing Council for Clinical and Academic Collaboration (NCCAC) is a committee composed of clinical, educational and administrative nurse leaders of the PNSO. The purpose of the NCCAC is to promote cooperation and collaboration between nursing education and nursing practice.

Section 3 - Initiatives

Initiatives are appointed by the Cabinet on an as-needed basis, as an outgrowth of any issue that requires an extended process to resolution through either:

- 1) the establishment of a task force; or
- 2) the establishment of other standing groups which do not fit into the normal Cabinet structure.

ARTICLE X - DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

Elected officers may be removed for due cause. Due cause shall be defined as unprofessional conduct, mental or physical impairment rendering the officer unable to fulfill the duties of office and/or failure to perform the duties of office as stated in these Bylaws. A process of removal may be initiated by the CNO, the Cabinet, or by petition of 50 PNSO members. The Cabinet will review for due cause and place a recommendation before the membership. Removal from office shall require two-thirds of the votes cast on ballots returned.

ARTICLE XI - PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The proceedings of the PNSO shall be governed by the rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* in all cases to which they are applicable and not inconsistent with these Bylaws or any special rules of order the organization may adopt.

ARTICLE XII – AMENDMENTS

These bylaws may be amended during the annual election balloting by two-thirds of the votes cast on ballots returned. Proposed amendments shall be read and discussed at the PNSO Assembly prior to submitting to the membership for a vote. The PNSO Cabinet is authorized to correct article and section designations, punctuation and cross-references, and to make other such technical and conforming changes as necessary to reflect the intent of the PNSO.

Adopted by vote of the membership - June, 2000
(Revised, November 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011)