

Operational Guideline 4: Electing Nursing Congress Delegates

Purpose

The purpose of Operational Guideline 4 is to define a uniform selection procedure and to determine the number and identity of annual Nursing Congress delegates in proportion to the number of RNs (not FTE) in each care site. The Nursing Congress is an annual one-day convention of elected front-line nursing representatives. At Congress, delegates address issues raised by constituents and Nursing satisfaction data, and determine solution-oriented initiatives which the Nursing Cabinet, standing committees and Congress delegates will drive throughout the following year.

Principles

Delegates are to be elected, not appointed, with the number of delegates being determined by a ratio of 1 delegate seat per 25 RNs in each patient-care area. The election of delegates is for a two-year term. Elections will be held on a rotational basis so that in any given year, approximately half of the delegates will be newly elected, and half will be returning for the second year of their term, balancing continuity of experience with opportunity for new participants. If the number of RNs in an area significantly changes from one year to the next, the Congress Planning Committee will work with managers, administrators and Human Resources to determine the best means of retaining 2nd-year delegates and identifying the number of newly-open delegate seats based on the reorganized constituency's needs.

Process

- The annual process begins by March 1 with the convening of a Congress Planning Committee. Every two years the demographic numbers for each patient-care area will be re-evaluated. The committee then identifies which delegates are returning for a second year, and how many new delegates need to be elected per area, with assistance from administrators and managers as necessary.
- In early June, the Chairs of the Congress Planning Committee notify managers and administrators, or their designee of the number of delegate vacancies available for election within their patient-care area. Each manager will facilitate a call for nominations within their service areas. It is recommended that, whenever possible, delegates be chosen from clinicians other than those in advanced roles.
- Managers will conduct the election process within their service areas using secret ballots. Managers should identify tellers to count the ballots, minimizing any potential conflicts of interest.
- Managers will announce the election results within their patient care areas and relay delegate information to the Congress Planning Committee chairs by July 1.