

Critical Care Nurses Raise Awareness of National Nurse Shortage

(NAPSA)—The United States faces a critical shortage of registered nurses, particularly the specialized, highly trained nurses who staff intensive care units, said Michael L. Williams, president of the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN). At AACN's annual conference held in Atlanta, Williams spoke about the need to retain experienced nurses, recruit new people to the profession and support new nurses in the workplace.



“If we do not promote nursing now as a viable career choice, with funding support for those who need it,” Williams said, “we will not have a nurse to assess and treat our pain, to help deliver our grandchildren, to keep us safe as we recover from surgery or to assure that our death is peaceful.”

One in seven hospitals nationwide reports registered nurse vacancy rates higher than 20 percent—an increase of 60 percent since 1999. The situation is the result of years of declining enrollment in nursing schools, an aging nursing population, and difficult working conditions including long, strenuous work hours.

To combat the shortage, the nursing industry, including AACN, has joined together in several collaborative projects designed to attract more people to the profession, including “The Campaign for Nursing’s Future,” sponsored by Johnson & Johnson, Nurses for a Healthier Tomorrow and the Call to the Profession: Nursing’s Agenda for the Future.

For more information on critical care nursing, please visit www.aacn.org.