

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February/March 2009

Contact: Jane F. Mahowald, State Team Lead, Facilitator Ohio Network for Nursing Workforce

**OHIO TO JOIN NATIONWIDE EFFORT TO MEET
FUTURE NEED FOR NURSES**

99,000 qualified applicants turned away from nursing schools in 2008, despite looming shortage

City, State – Ohio is one of 12 state teams selected to receive technical assistance for its efforts to improve health care through increased investments in nursing. Teams will identify and develop approaches to increase the number of students educated in our nation’s nursing programs – with the ultimate goal of reversing the looming nursing shortage that could leave Americans without enough nurses.

The nation is facing an unprecedented nursing shortage that will increase costs and threaten the health care of all Americans, including 78 million aging baby boomers. Thousands of qualified students are being turned away from nursing schools every year because of financial and other challenges, including a lack of funds to hire enough faculty to teach the number of students applying.

Ohio is among 12 others, all part of the Center to Champion Nursing in America’s 2009 cohort of state teams. The Center is a joint initiative of AARP, the AARP Foundation and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF). Other states recently selected to receive technical assistance include: Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Nebraska, New Mexico, New York, Rhode Island, Washington and West Virginia.

These new state teams will join 18 others already working to implement solutions to the nursing shortage. From coast to coast, those states are advocating for policy changes and fostering multi-stakeholder partnerships that increase nursing school enrollment and bring more nurses into the workforce.

“AARP knows that the impact of our changing health care system will be felt most acutely at the state level,” said Center to Champion Nursing in America Director Brenda Cleary. “The current work of these states to increase the number of skilled nurses in their communities is key to providing high quality, affordable health care in the future.”

The Ohio State Nursing Team identified two specific strategies for increasing Ohio’s nursing education capacity:

1. Develop interdisciplinary regional simulation centers for “team learning” that cross cuts levels of education and disciplines, and
2. Develop a transition to practice model based upon collaboration between nurse educators and nurse employers.

In return, CCNA requests that you agree to provide the following:

- Fall 2009 baseline of nursing school enrollments across all pre-licensure RN programs
- Repeated measures in Fall 2010
- Mentoring for other State Teams and Learning Collaboratives in the areas of:
 1. StudentMax implementation

CCNA will also support Ohio's state team with technical assistance based upon your request work with the Florida Center for Nursing to finalize the minimum data sets.

“These multi-stakeholder teams are well-positioned to influence change in states across the country,” said RWJF Senior Advisor for Nursing Susan Hassmiller. “It is essential that we provide them with the tools and assistance they need to ensure we have the nurses we need now and in the future.”

The Center to Champion Nursing in America is a joint initiative of AARP, the AARP Foundation and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. A consumer-driven, national force for change, the Center seeks to ensure that this country has the nurses it needs to care for all of us, now and in the future. The Center focuses on two main priorities: the nation's capacity to educate and to retain nurses. For more information, visit www.championnursing.org.

AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan membership organization that helps people 50+ have independence, choice and control in ways that are beneficial and affordable to them and society as a whole. AARP does not endorse candidates for public office or make contributions to either political campaigns or candidates. We produce AARP The Magazine, the definitive voice for 50+ Americans and the world's largest-circulation magazine with over 34.5 million readers; AARP Bulletin, the go-to news source for AARP's 40 million members and Americans 50+; AARP Segunda Juventud, the only bilingual U.S. publication dedicated exclusively to the 50+ Hispanic community; and our website, AARP.org. AARP Foundation is an affiliated charity that provides security, protection, and empowerment to older persons in need with support from thousands of volunteers, donors, and sponsors. We have staffed offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation focuses on the pressing health and health care issues facing our country. As the nation's largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to improving the health and health care of all Americans, the Foundation works with a diverse group of organizations and individuals to identify solutions and achieve comprehensive, meaningful and timely change. For more than 35 years the Foundation has brought experience, commitment, and a rigorous, balanced approach to the problems that affect the health and health care of those it serves. When it comes to helping Americans lead healthier lives and get the care they need, the Foundation expects to make a difference in your lifetime. For more information, visit www.rwjf.org.

###