



Oklahoma Nurses Association 2007 House of Delegates Resolution

**Subject: ONA's Position on Promoting Positive Work Environments
Introduced by: The Committee on Professional Practice in the Workplace**

Summary: The ONA Committee on Professional Practice has been working on issues related to promoting positive work environments and has recommended that the association work to eliminate horizontal violence through education and promotion of the Forces of Magnetism.

Whereas, the Oklahoma Nurses Association (ONA) has adopted workplace and workforce advocacy as our framework for addressing work environment issues, as well as promoting a positive image of nursing; and

Whereas, the International Council of Nurses (ICN) defines abuse as behavior that humiliates, degrades or otherwise indicates a lack of respect for the dignity and worth and of an individual and the American Association of Critical Care Nurses (AACN) states that abuse can take the form of intimidating behaviors such as condescending language, impatience, angry outbursts, reluctance or refusal to answer questions, threatening body language, and physical contact. The emotional impact of abusiveness demoralizes people and can leave the victim feeling personally and/or professionally attacked, devalued, or humiliated; and

Whereas, the American Nurses Association (ANA) has resolved to promote healthy work environments for all nurses, that include the right of all nurses to work in environments free of hostility and abusive behavior; and

Whereas, the ANA Scope and Standards of Nursing Practice includes leadership as a standard of practice, mandating that the registered nurse provide leadership in the professional practice setting, and includes responsibility for engaging in teamwork, being a team builder, and working to create and maintain healthy work environments; and

Whereas, the American Nurses Association Code of Ethics with Interpretative Statements clearly articulates the obligation of registered nurses to develop and maintain respectful relationships with colleagues; and

Whereas, horizontal violence is one of the largest destructors of professional workplace culture and includes all acts of unkindness, discourtesy, sabotage, divisiveness, infighting, lack of cohesion, scapegoating and criticism; and

Whereas, many nurses have not been educated on the detrimental effects of horizontal violence on working relationships, nurse retention and patient safety; and

Whereas, education in communication, conflict resolution and leadership skills have been shown to have promote healthy work environments.

RESOLVED, that the Oklahoma Nurses Association shall acknowledge the harmful impact of horizontal violence and engage nurses in all specialties and practice settings to reduce the harmful effects and prevent future occurrences, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Oklahoma Nurses Association endorse the right of every nurse to work in a healthy work environment free from horizontal violence and the ethical responsibility to:

- a. Be responsible for self-monitoring communication patterns to ensure respectful team interaction
- b. Work to ensure respectful communication, confront hostility, verbal abuse or other forms of horizontal violence
- c. Advocate for students and nurses new to the profession
- d. Provide leadership among team members in modeling appropriate communication
- e. Educate colleagues and students about healthy work environments, positive team behavior and communication skills.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Oklahoma Nurses Association work collaboratively with other nursing associations to disseminate information to practicing nurses, nurse managers, hospital administrators and other stakeholders related to:

- a. Promote the principles of a healthy work environment
- b. Educate nurses on communication strategies, conflict resolution and workforce advocacy
- c. Educate on the detrimental effects of horizontal violence in the workplace
- d. Benefits of leadership development education for nurses at all levels and in all roles
- e. Promote the ANCC Forces of Magnetism and the Magnet Designation
- f. Utilize the ONA Excellence in the Workplace Environment and other awards to recognize leaders that are promoting positive work environments.