



**American  
Red Cross**

## **American Red Cross Nursing Aligns with Institute of Medicine Recommendations for the Future of Nursing**

WASHINGTON, D.C., September 14, 2011 - American Red Cross nurses provide direct health services during disasters, teach Red Cross nurse assistant training and caregiver courses and work in military hospitals and clinics. They develop and teach lifesaving health and safety courses. Nurses also serve as Red Cross managers and members of governing bodies, and as liaisons throughout the global health care system. Their practice is fundamental to the core mission of the American Red Cross.

"A strong cadre of nurses is a must for the American Red Cross," says the organization's president and CEO Gail McGovern.

That's why Red Cross nursing supports the recommendations made in the recent Institute of Medicine report, *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*. Institute findings have spurred the launch of a nation-wide initiative to implement solutions to challenges facing the nursing profession, and Red Cross nurses aim to be part of that effort.

While the Institute of Medicine was gathering information for their groundbreaking report, the Red Cross was charting a pathway of its own to remove scope-of-practice barriers. American Red Cross president and CEO Gail McGovern authorized the roll out of a nurse-led disaster health services community response model in November 2010, just a month after the Institute recommended that nurses be allowed to practice to the full extent of their education and training.

The nurse-led disaster health services community response model ensures that Red Cross nurses have the practice flexibility they need to meet the health needs of disaster clients. Now the nearly 5,000 Red Cross nurses who provide disaster health services community response can act within their scope of practice and in accordance with their license, assessing and intervening as they have been prepared to do by their schooling and experiences.

Clients and communities need that flexibility. Red Cross nursing serves people under stress, people who, often on a moment's notice, have been evacuated from their homes to temporary shelters. Evacuees arrive at Red Cross shelters with chronic illnesses, disabilities or disaster-related injuries and illnesses, and often without the medications and medical equipment needed to treat those conditions.

"Within the chaos that can occur during a disaster, no amount of written material can address every health situation that may arise," says American Red Cross chief nurse Sharon Stanley. "The nurse-led disaster health services community response model allows the Red Cross health team to provide the best in care while partnering with community health care systems on the ground to better address disaster client needs."

The National Nursing Committee of the American Red Cross plans to address additional health related recommendations in *The Future of Red Cross Nursing: A Blueprint for Action* built on Institute of Medicine recommendations during 2012. The American Red Cross National Nursing Committee is a corporate level advisory body that helps the organization achieve its strategic goals through facilitating effective nurse and health professional involvement.

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