

Where Advocacy Happens

Let's start with the questions of "Where advocacy happens?" Remember, advocacy is about using your knowledge and experience to help others understand what you see and what you know; what is working and what is not. For the patient, that happens when we speak on behalf of the patient to improve the medical or discharge plan. What about advocacy away from the bedside?

Unit	Hospital	Community
• Reporting safety concerns • Leading practice improvements • Shared governance	• Hospital Committees • Quality Councils • Speaking with leadership • Professional governance	• Health fairs • School partnerships • Local organizations
State	Organizations	National
• State association • Board of Nursing • Legislative Day • Political engagement	• Membership • Committees • Conferences • Leadership	• Public comment opportunities • Federal legislators • Political engagement

Patients and Families

We have an obligation to advocate on behalf of the patient to ensure they get the care they need. Even when uncomfortable, nurses are experts at speaking up on behalf of their patients and their families.

Unit and Hospital

The hospital where you work is an outstanding location for early advocacy efforts. Things never improve if someone doesn't **speak up and step forward**. Advocacy is about influencing the decisions being made—your unit and hospital likely have **many** areas where your voice and unique perspective is needed.

State and Federal Government

While this can be the most intimidating for early advocacy efforts, it is a critical location for significant policy and financial decisions that impact patients and nurses. Fortunately, there are multiple groups that can support individual advocacy efforts, removing some of the intimidation while also amplifying our individual voices.