

**EXPLORING APPROACHES TO ADVOCACY AND ACTIVISM  
IN NURSING  
CHALLENGING DISCRIMINATION, POLICIES, AND  
PRACTICE**

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## **Executive Summary**

This article has shed light on the nuanced nature of healthcare discrimination, lobbying, and the effects of public and private policies and legislation. It has also explored proactive methods for combating systemic disparities, as well as successful lobbying techniques and the value of interdisciplinary partnerships. This debate has not only laid forth strategies for critically evaluating and contesting these regulatory frameworks; it has also shown how organisational policies and public legislation may both empower and hinder nursing practise. Aside from that, nurses' continued contributions to a more just healthcare paradigm are crucial. Methods ranging from introspective self-examination to political involvement on a larger scale are all necessary threads in the complex fabric of healthcare change. Therefore, a comprehensive strategy to better the nursing profession and the healthcare system as a whole benefits from an in-depth familiarity with advocacy, legal frameworks, and organisational policies.

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Grade Assignment Help

## **1.0 Introduction**

The importance of action and advocacy in the nursing profession cannot be overstated. These responsibilities extend beyond those of a clinician and include ethical duties related to providing care that is both just and equitable for all. Furthermore, nurses frequently find themselves at the crossroads of healthcare delivery and societal challenges, such as racial, gender, and socioeconomic inequality. The poor healthcare policies and practises that exacerbate these problems contribute to an ongoing cycle of inequity in the healthcare industry as a whole.

Because of their frontline interactions with patients and the healthcare system, nurses are in a prime position to challenge such conventions. Additionally, a paradigm change that takes into account both medical and societal concerns can be facilitated by the incorporation of advocacy into nursing. Therefore, this discussion will centre on analysing the benefits and drawbacks of different forms of activism and advocacy in nursing, with a particular emphasis on the difficulties associated with eliminating prejudice and implementing new policies and procedures. This topic seeks to provide deep understanding of the processes that might make nursing more responsive to social concerns through in-depth investigation.

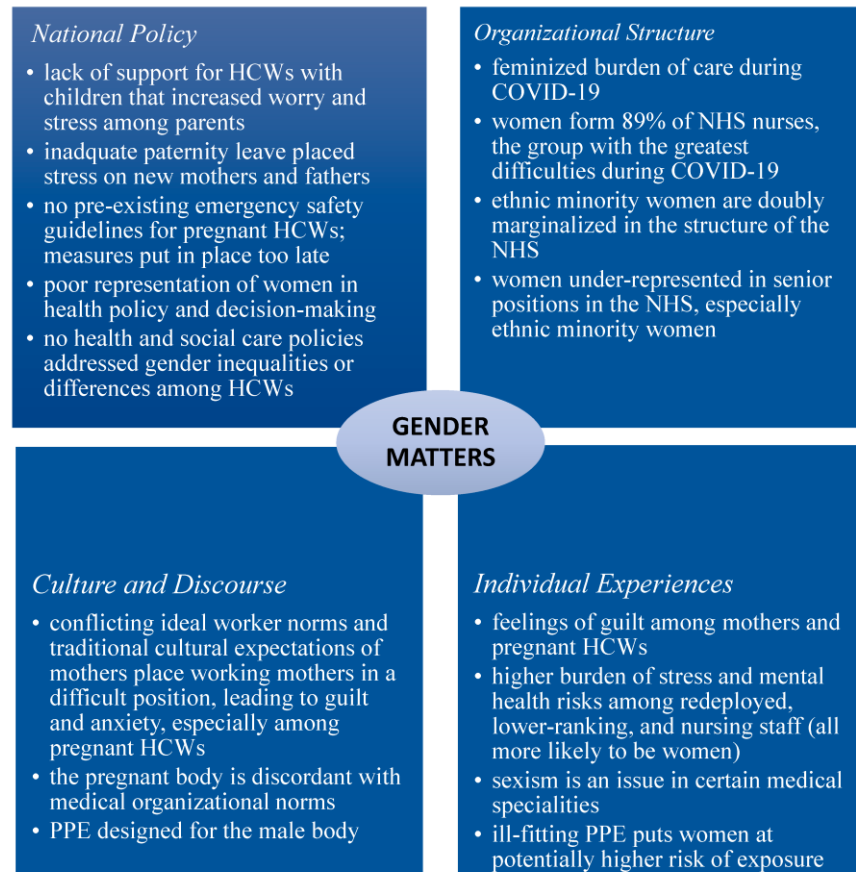
## **2.0 Critical Analysis of Discrimination and Proactive Challenge**

### **2.1 Explanation of Structural, political, organisational, and cultural discrimination**

Discrimination in the form of structural impediments serves to marginalise some groups of people. This may show up as a lack of equitable educational and professional possibilities for nurses. Furthermore, healthcare policy may unintentionally favour one group over another, perpetuating bias throughout the system.

If a nurse uses their position of authority to punish someone for their political views or associations, they are engaging in political discrimination (Wros *et al*, 2021). Due to political

constraints or prejudices, nurses may be unable to fully exercise their advocacy and activism activities. Furthermore, political objectives that want to preserve the status quo may undermine efforts to fight for healthcare improvements.



**Figure 1: General analysis in nursing section**

(Source: Researchgate, 2021)

Inequitable remuneration, a lack of participation in leadership positions, and the arbitrary distribution of resources are all examples of discriminatory practises that may be found within the healthcare industry. In addition, a hostile work atmosphere can be fostered by a lack of inclusive policies, which can lead to persistent treatment differences among workers.

The term "cultural discrimination" describes unfavourable treatment of someone due to their culture, ethnicity, or race. Furthermore, incorrect diagnoses and inefficient treatment plans may

result from nurses' lack of cultural competency (Seelman and Poteat, 2020). This kind of lack of knowledge contributes to existing healthcare inequities and has a detrimental effect on patient outcomes.

Discrimination comes in many forms, each of which provides its own set of obstacles to the growth of nurse activism and advocacy. Therefore, combating these discriminatory practises and establishing an equitable healthcare system requires a holistic strategy.

## **2.2 Proactive strategies for challenging discrimination**

Education and training programmes are an important first step in combating prejudice in the nursing profession. Focusing on unconscious biases and how they affect patient care, these programmes should help healthcare professionals become more culturally competent.

Formulating policies and reviewing them on a regular basis is another important strategy. Experts and interested parties should be consulted when formulating anti-discrimination policies. In addition, compliance can be ensured and prejudice of any kind, no matter how subtle, may be uncovered through frequent audits.

For immediate action, a safe method of filing discrimination reports is essential. Nurses may feel more comfortable reporting misconduct if they know they will be protected from retaliation if they use a protected whistleblowing channel (Salla *et al*, 2023).

Community outreach is essential in addition to internal initiatives. By shedding focus on the problem, public awareness campaigns can help gain social support for reformative efforts in the hospital context.

Registered nurses need to be vocal participants in policy discussions. Alliances with external advocacy groups can give these debates more clout (Okongwu, 2021). Together, each has the power to demand legislation that finally puts an end to discrimination in all its forms.

## **2.3 Identification and appraisal of discriminatory practices**

Strong data collection is essential for first steps in detecting discrimination. Healthcare providers should track patients' results and analyse the data separately for each demographic. Disparities that may be attributed to bias will be brought to light by this method.

Involving an external auditor in the review of policies and procedures can help ensure objectivity. In addition, this method can reveal institutionalised types of bias that may go unnoticed by internal stakeholders.

Inviting people to submit complaints about discrimination in a confidential manner might reveal incidents that might otherwise go undetected. In addition, timely actions need periodic assessment of these reports.

The prevalence of prejudice in the healthcare industry can be better understood with the use of regular surveys of both healthcare providers and patients. In addition, focus groups can go even farther into these poll results, providing quantitative data with even more nuance.

In addition to providing valuable organisational insights, compliance with ethical principles and statutory requirements may provide a methodical analysis of current procedures. Any departure from these standards flags an area for quick investigation.

## **3.0 Critical Analysis of Approaches to Advocacy, Negotiation, and Escalation**

### **3.1 Understanding advocacy, negotiation, and escalation**

Within the context of nursing, the term "advocacy" refers to the process of looking out for the best interests of patients by way of proactive representation, ethical decision-making, and appropriate actions. In addition, it includes anything from ensuring that appropriate treatment is provided to fighting rules that are discriminatory.



The process of negotiation acts as the fulcrum upon which competing interests are balanced and cooperative solutions are reached. In the context of healthcare, it takes deft negotiation to find common ground between administrative restrictions, the limits of healthcare providers, and the requirements of patients (Brockie *et al*, 2023). In addition, the process of negotiation requires interaction with a variety of interested parties, such as medical professionals, administrators, and even insurance providers on occasion.

Escalation is the next natural step to take when lobbying and negotiation have been tried, but have failed to produce the desired results. To escalate a situation means to involve more senior officials or specialised agencies in order to solve the problems (Zanchetta *et al*, 2021). In addition, it may require extraneous methods such as submitting a formal complaint or, in the most extreme circumstances, taking legal action.

Nursing professionals are better equipped to navigate the complexities of healthcare delivery when they have a nuanced understanding of advocacy, negotiation, and escalation. As a result, they are able to provide better service to their patients while also combating structural challenges that stand in the way of fair treatment.

### **3.2 Analysing Approaches to Advocacy**

Advocating for change in healthcare settings through the use of existing laws and regulations is an aspect of legal advocacy. This method of lobbying is powerful when it comes to criticising policies that are discriminatory and has the potential to lead to substantial improvements.

Ethical advocacy is a form of advocacy that focuses on moral imperatives and looks at systemic problems through an ethical lens. In addition to that, it necessitates the incorporation of ethical frameworks into the process of decision-making and the establishment of policies.

Movements at the grassroots level, which are frequently the result of community involvement, provide nursing professionals the ability to mobilise public support. Aside from that, it helps bring

important topics to the forefront of society and political conversations, which is a significant benefit.

Advocating on behalf of a political cause requires active participation in the policymaking process as well as lobbying activities. In addition, this strategy involves engaging in discussions on healthcare policy and having direct conversations with legislative representatives.

The many forms of advocacy each have their own set of advantages and disadvantages, which determines the degree to which they are ideal for tackling various problems encountered within the healthcare system. The efficacy of lobbying activities can be significantly increased by using a smart combination of these various tactics.

### **3.3 Collaborative work with people, citizens, and service users**

Collaborating across disciplines includes not just nursing but also collaborating with other medical experts, therapists, and social workers. The patients will receive holistic treatment as a result of this collaborative approach.

It is possible to dramatically increase the effectiveness of healthcare advocacy efforts by including members of the community. In addition, the engagement of citizens helps to raise public awareness and provides an air of authenticity to lobbying initiatives (Weitzel *et al*, 2020).

It is possible to provide care that is more centred on the patient by actively seeking out and incorporating input from service users. In addition to this, it offers crucial insights into areas that are in need of reform, which enriches lobbying efforts.

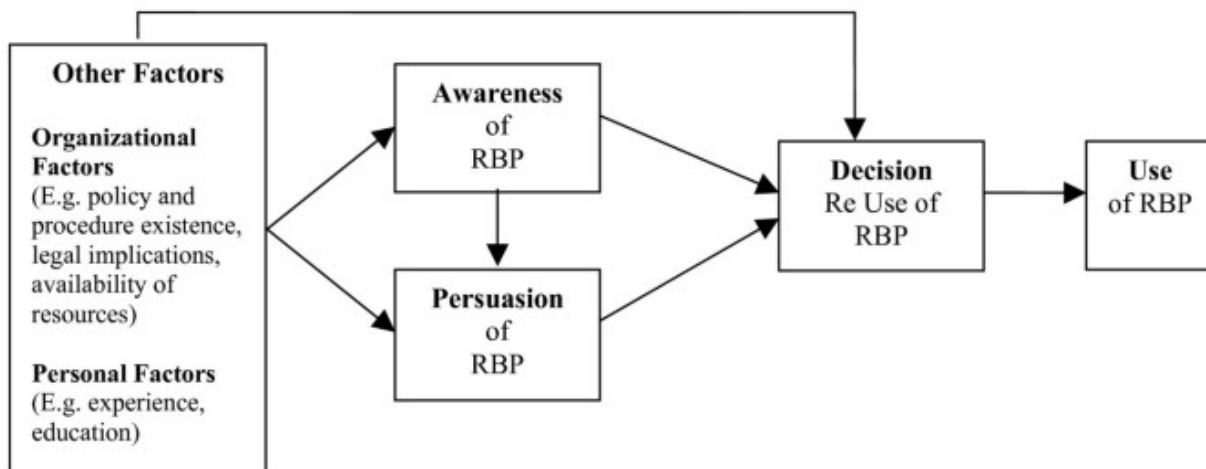
Partnerships with outside advocacy groups, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and community organisations provide an additional layer of support and resources (Tisdall and Cuevas-Parra, 2022). In addition, these partnerships frequently contribute new points of view as well as potential solutions to problems that are widespread in the healthcare industry.

In the field of healthcare, changing the status quo may best be done through collaborative efforts, which offer a multidimensional approach. Nursing professionals are able to more effectively advocate for changes and offer improved patient care as a result of the synergy that is formed as a result of these interactions.

## 4.0 Interpretation of Organisational Policies and Procedures

### 4.1 Consequences of organisational policies

The breadth and efficiency of nursing practise are significantly influenced by organisational policies. Patient care, professional growth, and ethical adherence are all bolstered by a strong policy framework. However, policies can also make prejudice more widespread, make it harder to use evidence in practise, and limit creative approaches (Heck *et al*, 2022). Furthermore, such rules may have an unfavourable effect on the mental health of nursing personnel, which in turn may have an effect on the quality of healthcare provided to patients. Nursing staff and the communities they serve might be negatively affected in the long run when rules are at odds with overarching healthcare goals or accepted ethical standards.



**Figure 2: Organisational Factors**

(Source: Researchgate, 2022)

## **4.2 Identifying mechanisms for challenging organisational policies**

Unfit or harmful policies require a multifaceted strategy to address them. The foundation for finding places to enhance is open and honest conversation. Furthermore, healthcare workers should be made aware of the many reporting and policy challenge channels accessible to them, such as ombudsmen and internal review boards. In addition, using professional nursing groups can give the unified voice and backing essential for making progress (Cooper Brathwaite *et al.*, 2022). Involving multidisciplinary teams and fighting for patients' rights are two further ways to see the big picture of how policy shapes clinical practise. In conclusion, a climate that encourages high standards of care and honesty on the part of professionals may be created via the rigorous examination and challenge of organisational policies.

## **5.0 Interpretation of Legislation, Public Policy, and Health and Social Care Policies**

### **5.1 Consequences of Legislation and public policy**

The nursing profession is profoundly influenced by laws and public policies. Generally speaking, compliant policies serve as facilitators, laying up a solid foundation for ethical practise, professional development, and the best possible patient experience. However, poorly thought-out laws might obstruct efficient healthcare delivery by establishing limited scopes of practise or maintaining institutionalised bias (Kitafuna, 2022). In addition, legal barriers might make nurses feel less valued, reducing their potential to make positive changes in patient care. As a result, not only does the nursing community, but the whole efficiency of healthcare systems, benefit from the dialogue between lawmakers and nurses.

### **5.2 Mechanisms for challenging public policy**

Strategic preparation and coordinated action are essential for challenging public policy. A thorough education in policy analysis can help nurses identify and address gaps in current regulations. In

addition, consulting with seasoned legal counsel might shed light on possible avenues for remedy. Furthermore, public campaigns and media participation may increase awareness, win over the public, and put pressure on lawmakers (Meyers, 2022). A nurse's ability to advocate for change is bolstered by their membership in a professional nursing body, which provides access to information and networking opportunities. In conclusion, contesting and modifying unfavourable public policy requires legal competence, collaborative activity, and public backing.

## **6.0 Conclusion**

Nurses serve as a crucial link in the healthcare system, connecting patients' needs with society goals. They are in a special position to combat unfair policies, promote change, and encourage open communication among different groups. This discussion has shed light on the nuances of discrimination, lobbying, and the effect of public and institutional policies on the nursing profession. There are many different ways to advocate, each with its own potential benefits and drawbacks. Therefore, nurses who have a deep awareness of these complexities are crucial to the development of fair healthcare systems.

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## **8.0 Appendices**

### **American Nurses Association (ANA) - Advocacy guidelines for registered Nurses.**

The ethical obligation that registered nurses have to advocate for the health and safety of their patients is outlined in this paper. In addition, it covers issues pertaining to patient advocacy, such as the professional code of conduct, ethical concerns, and legal implications. In addition to placing an emphasis on the patient's autonomy, it specifies the role of the nurse as the person responsible for promoting communication between patients and other healthcare practitioners. In addition to this, it offers advice on how to manage difficult ethical situations that may arise in clinical settings.

### **International Council of Nurses (ICN) - Code of ethics for Nurses**

This all-encompassing framework has the purpose of informing and guiding nursing practises all around the world. Aside from that, the text focuses on a number of other ideas, one of which being the necessity for nurses to act as advocates for their patients. It dives into the specific responsibilities that come along with this function, such as supporting safe practises and making sure that the rights of patients are protected. In spite of this, it provides a breakdown of the percentage of clinical obligations to advocacy tasks that should be carried out.

### **World Health Organisation (WHO) - Advocacy in Public Health**

This document contains sections that devote themselves to the significance of healthcare providers in the promotion of public health. Despite the fact that its scope is not restricted solely to nursing, this document contains such sections. In addition to this, it discusses themes including the advancement of health, the provision of preventative treatment, and the societal elements that have an impact on an individual's state of health. In addition to this, it describes the steps that healthcare professionals need to follow in order to contribute to the public discourse on subjects relevant to



health and engage in the process of policy creation. This is important since health policy affects everyone.

### **American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN) - Practice standards for Nurse Advocates**

This guidebook offers thorough instructions for critical care nurses who simultaneously serve as advocates. Ethical theories and the finer points of advocacy in ERs are discussed at length. The principles also provide a benchmark for clinical governance and decision making that encourages transparency, competence, and ethical behaviour.

### **National Patient Advocate Foundation (NPAF) - Healthcare Advocacy Guidelines**

Although the article's intended audience is patient advocates, nurses working in this sector will find useful information as well. In addition, a detailed strategy for expanding access to medical care is included. It also clarifies the part that nurses play in easing the healthcare process, which should make it simpler for patients to understand and use their options.