



FY2016 Highlights

The Georgia Board of Nursing ("Board") exists to protect, promote, and preserve the public health, safety, and welfare through legislative regulation and control of practical nursing and registered professional education and practice. In FY2016, the Board worked diligently to improve services and strengthen programs for the protection of the public. Highlights of the Board's work are listed below:

- Reduced the timeline for the resolution of complaints by nearly 22%. This improvement was made even as the number of complaints received increased by 4.8%. Since FY2012, the Board has seen a 97.9% increase in complaints received.
- Began utilizing Nursys.com for license verification purposes. Nursys.com is a national database administered by NCSBN to provide verifications of licensure between U.S. jurisdictions. In addition to improving customer service (Nursys.com allows licensees to pay and request verifications online 24 hours a day and verifications are made available immediately), utilization of Nursys.com increased protection of the public by providing a secure mechanism for licensees to obtain verifications of licensure without the potential for fraud.
- Implemented continuing competency requirements passed by the General Assembly.
- Utilized CE Broker to track continuing education documentation for nurses. This service was provided at no cost to the state and prevented staff from being burdened by maintaining continuing education documentation.
- Directed staff to develop an Imposter Alert Webpage to alert employers and the public regarding individuals who had held themselves out as nurses without possessing the statutorily required education and licensure.
- Implemented e-Notify, a free and innovative nurse licensure notification system that allows employers to receive real-time email notifications about nurses that they employ. The system provides publicly available discipline data directly to the employer automatically as the data is entered into the Nursys database without the employer needing to proactively seek the information. This service was provided at no cost to the state.
- Worked with the Attorney General's Office to develop a disciplinary hearing calendar with the Office of State Administrative Hearings to reduce timelines for resolution of complaints.
- Hosted two NCLEX Item Writing Sessions. The sessions provided nursing educators with the opportunity to interact with NCLEX Exam staff to understand the exam development process and to learn how to develop questions in NCLEX format. These events were hosted courtesy of the National Council of State Boards of Nursing ("NCSBN") at no cost to the state. Approximately three hundred (300) educators able to participate in the sessions.
- Worked with the Secretary of State's Office to make its website more accessible via major search engines.

- Reviewed and revised rules regulating standards of practice for nurses.
- Reviewed and revised rules regulating registered nursing education programs and practical nursing education programs.
- Reviewed and revised applications for licensure to ensure that the process was streamlined and easily understood by applicants.
- Worked with various stakeholder organizations to provide information regarding the Board's work.
- Formed a Nurse Practice Committee to provide the Board additional resources for consultation and advice regarding practice issues.
- Continued strategic planning work to identify desired outcomes and develop a pathway to implement processes to achieve desired outcomes.
- Worked with the Georgia Nurses Association and NCSBN to explore the development of an alternative to discipline program to remove impaired licensees from practice in a more timely fashion and increase protection of the public.
- Developed a training manual for call center agents to utilize when answering questions from stakeholders regarding Board processes. Additionally, staff conducted multiple training days with call center agents to answer questions regarding Board processes.
- Utilized investigative committees comprised of board members to review cases more expeditiously.
- Worked with the Georgia Nursing Leadership Coalition to provide workforce data to ensure that nursing workforce needs are met across the state.
- Hosted informational meetings with stakeholders regarding the Nurse Licensure Compact.
- Worked with NCSBN to implement a data integrity project to increase accuracy of the licensure database information, import old records from microfilm and ensure that all public disciplinary information is available to the public and other boards of nursing. This project is being implemented at no cost to the state.
- Developed a triage system to prioritize the handling of complaints and investigations to ensure that cases, where imminent danger to the public exists, are handled as quickly possible.
- Developed an investigative interview form to ensure standardization of the investigative interview process.
- Focused on transparency and communication with licensees and stakeholders.
- Worked with existing advisory committees (Nursing Education Committee and APRN Committee) to improve communication and regulatory processes.
- Utilized *The Georgian Nurse*, a thirty (30) page, full color publication to educate and inform licensees and stakeholders of important regulatory information. This publication is provided at no cost to the state.