

Activities to Understand the Public Policy Process

1. Research.

A. Find out who your elected officials are and be able to distinguish between state senator and state representative and officials elected to Congress. www.legis.state.ia.us The fifth item under “Popular Links” is “Find Your Legislator”.

B. Review information posted on the Iowa Nurses Association web page www.iowanurses.org that documents what has happened in past years and what is happening in the current year on health care and nursing practice issues.

C. Develop some depth of knowledge on one or more health care or nursing practice issues.

2. **Verbal Dialogue.** Attend local community forums for candidates/elected representatives and raise a question about health care issue or practice of nursing issue. Report back in writing what question they asked or another health professional asked and report what the candidate/elected official response was. (Often they will find the candidate/elected official does not have much of an understanding of the health or nursing practice issue. This is an opportunity to learn some “patient teaching”.)
3. **Written Dialogue.** Prepare a letter/email to your elected representative about a health care issue or practice of nursing issue. (This is another opportunity to demonstrate “patient teaching”.)
4. **Experience the lobbying process.** Attend the Legislative and Public Policy Day on February 15, 2007 held at the Wallace State Office Building and the State Capitol and experience the process of lobbying. Or contact the INA office for days and times of availability January through May.