

## Information Source Credibility and Content Reliability

The rapidly growing demand for health information raises concerns about source credibility and content reliability, yet the burden of verification rests with the user. The endless amount of available information often outweighs its quality. While social media users express a preference for identifying legitimate sources, they often do little to confirm their authenticity. Unidentified, unverified, and unregulated sources frequently spread misinformation. Without the ability to ascertain the accuracy of health information, social media users risk worsening their health conditions (Egala et al., 2024). Conversely, reliable information can reduce anxiety and psychological distress related to illness. Credible sources, marked by authorship, affiliation, current information, and disclosure, enhance perceived reliability, fostering user communica-

tion, community input, interaction, sharing, and collaboration (Egala et al., 2024).

## Challenges Posed by Health Misinformation

Although social media users look for trustworthy health information, they often lack the necessary health and digital knowledge skills to decipher health misinformation. Cultural backgrounds can shape how misinformation is received, and even healthcare professionals can be susceptible. Importantly, research suggests that simply presenting facts isn't enough to counteract misinformation, making it difficult to debunk online falsehoods. Healthcare practitioners have a key role in directing patients to reliable, evidence-based healthcare information. They can encourage individuals to critically assess their information sources and provide new information with additional

context, rather than just labeling their perception as incorrect (Kbaier et al., 2024).

## Conclusion

The rapid growth of social media and readily available online health information offers both infinite resources and easy sharing, but the problem of misinformation could undermine the advantages for both individuals and healthcare professionals. While social media platforms ideally should ensure information accuracy, ultimately, a joint effort of healthcare leaders and government policymakers is needed to manage health information. This collaboration would foster the expansion of trustworthy sources and reliable information on social media ■.

References online:  
[myamericannurse.com/?p=419644](https://myamericannurse.com/?p=419644)

# Empowering Nurses: Bridging Self-Care, Wellness, and Public Policy

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Over the winter months, I was worried how new administration would impact nurses and healthcare. Years ago, my therapist advised me to stop ruminating about issues in which I have no control. While I have made progress, I still occasionally find myself caught in a cycle of overthinking. This changed when I participated in ANA-Ohio's Inaugural Policy Influencer Bootcamp. The experience transformed my perspective, empowering me to take action rather than dwell on uncertainties.

At the bootcamp, I gained insights into the policy development process, learning how laws are crafted, and the critical role nurses can play in shaping policy. It became clear that many decisions affecting our profession and our patients are made without our input. These

decisions go on to influence our work environment, the resources available to us, and Social Determinants of Health (SDOH). Despite recognizing these issues in our daily practice, nurses often fail to advocate for necessary changes. How can we ensure our well-being if we do not champion the changes we need?

## Advocating for Social Determinants of Health

Nurses have a unique perspective on SDOH because we see firsthand how factors like housing, education, and access to healthcare affect our patients. By engaging in public policy, we can advocate for changes that address these determinants, leading to healthier communities. This advocacy not only benefits patients but also impacts nurses as part of the community.

## The Intersection of Public Policy and Self-Care

Nurses are at the forefront of healthcare and community wellness and our well-being is crucial for the delivery of high-quality care. Policies that support nurses' health and wellness are essential to promote opportunities for self-care and safety (ANA, n.d). For instance, mental health resources and workplace violence regulations can significantly improve nurses' work environments and overall well-being. When nurses are healthy and supported through both policy and action, we are better equipped to care for our patients.

## Taking Action: From Ruminating to Advocating

The Policy Influencer Bootcamp empowered me to shift from ruminating to tak-

ing action. I now understand the importance of nurses' voices in shaping policies that affect our profession, our patients, and our own well-being. By advocating for policies that support self-care and wellness, we can create a healthier work

environment, champion a healthier community, and improve patient outcomes. It is time for nurses to pull up a chair to the table where policies are made or we will miss the opportunity to take action on behalf of ourselves and our patients. ■

#### Reference:

American Nurses Association. (n.d.) Health Policy. Retrieved 5/26/2025 from <https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/health-policy/>

# Beyond Bedside Skills: The Educator's Role in Cultivating a Culture of Self-Care

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## Introduction

Nursing is a profession defined by compassion, commitment, and clinical excellence. However, beneath these virtues lies an unspoken culture that often equates self-sacrifice with professional dedication. For generations, nurses have internalized messages that rest is weakness and self-care is optional. These cultural norms, though deeply rooted, are increasingly incompatible with the demands of modern nursing practice. As burnout and compassion fatigue reach critical levels, it is imperative to reframe self-care not as a luxury, but as a professional responsibility essential to both nurse well-being and patient care (Miller & Hutzell-Dunham, 2022; Williams et al., 2022).

## The Unsustainable Unspoken Norms

Within nursing culture, a deeply ingrained set of unspoken expectations has shaped how nurses approach their work: Nurses don't stop. Patients always come first. Breaks are optional. Self-care is secondary. These silent rules discourage essential wellness behaviors—such as staying hydrated, taking scheduled breaks, or seeking emotional support after traumatic events.

This mindset fosters a workplace culture where rest is mistaken for weakness, and requesting help is often perceived as a sign of inadequacy. Nurses are frequently praised for picking up additional shifts, pushing through exhaustion, and placing their own needs last. While this dedication may be

well-intentioned, the belief that relentless self-sacrifice equates to professionalism is ultimately unsustainable (Khatatbeh et al., 2022).

## The Cost of Self-Neglect

A growing body of research confirms the harmful consequences of self-neglect within the nursing profession. Nurses who consistently overlook their own well-being are significantly more likely to experience burnout, compassion fatigue, and premature exit from the workforce (Khatatbeh et al., 2022).

A 2022 article in *Pain Management Nursing* emphasizes the critical need to promote and sustain self-care behaviors among nurses to preserve personal health and professional satisfaction (Miller & Hutzell-Dunham, 2022). Additionally, findings from Moss et al. (2016) highlight how burnout and moral distress can severely impair clinical judgment and compromise patient outcomes.

Despite this evidence, many healthcare organizations continue to lack formal structures or expectations that prioritize nurse wellness—a missed opportunity to protect both nurses and the patients they serve.

## Reframing the Narrative: Self-Care as a Professional Responsibility

Nursing educators and clinical leaders hold a vital role in shaping not only clinical competence but also the professional identity of

the nurses they mentor. Their influence extends beyond procedures and protocols—encompassing how nurses perceive their own value, set boundaries, and develop the mindset for sustainable, long-term practice.

As part of this responsibility, educators must actively teach, model, and reinforce self-care as a non-negotiable aspect of ethical and effective nursing. Self-care is not a luxury or an afterthought—it is a professional responsibility that safeguards the well-being of both nurses and patients.

By embedding the principles of self-care early in a nurse's career—starting in orientation and continuing through ongoing development—educators can challenge the entrenched culture of self-neglect and help establish healthier, more sustainable norms. These principles should be treated with the same seriousness and regularity as clinical skills review.

To support this cultural shift, educators can:

- **Normalize the Language of Wellness:** Introduce and consistently use terms such as psychological safety, professional boundaries, and emotional regulation in clinical education, debriefings, and daily communication. Making these concepts routine helps remove stigma and promotes open dialogue.
- **Incorporate Reflective Practice:** Create opportunities during simulations, post-shift check-ins, and clinical debriefings for nurses to reflect not just on patient care but on their own emotional and