

South Region Director – Guillermo Valdes, DNP, MSN-HCS, PGC-NEd., MEDSURG-BC, RN



Serving his second term as South Region Director, Dr. Guillermo Valdes has nearly 40 years of clinical, academic, and leadership experience. His focus includes promoting professional excellence, mentorship, and safe, consistent healthcare delivery.

LERC Liaison – Marsha Martin, RN



Marsha Martin has served for decades as a critical care nurse at Shands. She is deeply committed to advocating for nurses and protecting their workplace rights through her role as the FNA Labor and Employment Relations Council (LERC) Liaison.

Director of Early Career Nurses – MacKenzie Simmons, BSN, RN



MacKenzie Simmons represents the next generation of nurse leaders. Having previously served on the Board of Directors for the National Student Nurses Association, she champions innovation, well-being, and mentorship for early-career nurses.

What's on the Agenda for the 2026 Legislative Session?

In the 2026 Florida Legislative Session, scheduled to run from January 13 - March 13, the Florida Nurses Association will continue advocating for policies that protect nurses' work environments, education, and ability to practice. FNA will also continue educating lawmakers on evidence-based issues that impact the health and safety of Florida's citizens.

Protection from Surgical Smoke

Once again, surgical smoke is on the docket — and this year, FNA is hopeful that legislation will finally pass to require surgical centers to implement effective smoke evacuation systems in operating rooms. Exposure to surgical smoke poses serious health risks to surgical teams and patients, and FNA remains committed to ensuring safer working conditions for all healthcare professionals. The 2026 **Protection from Surgical Smoke** bills are **SB 162**, sponsored by **Senator Davis**, and **HB 93**, sponsored by **Representative Woodson**.

Strengthening Nursing Education

FNA will also support legislation aimed at improving approval standards for nursing education programs and placing program oversight under the **Florida Board of**

Nursing. Strengthening these standards will help ensure that nursing programs across the state maintain high-quality education and prepare competent, safe practitioners for the future nursing workforce — ultimately protecting the health and safety of all Floridians.

Patient-Directed Medical Orders

Another focus for 2026 is supporting the implementation of **Patient-Directed Medical Orders (PDMOs)** in Florida. PDMOs ensure that patients' healthcare treatment preferences are clearly documented and honored across all care settings. PDMOs provide a standardized, legally recognized process that helps uphold patient autonomy, improve continuity of care, and reduce confusion during medical emergencies.

The 2026 PDMO bills are HB 369 by Representative Plasencia and SB 312 by Senator Rodriguez.

Expanding the Agenda - Topics Identified by Members

A core part of FNA's grassroots legislative program is to educate lawmakers about issues that affect the health and well-being of Florida's citizens. During the **2025 FNA Membership Assembly**, members

identified several key topics to add or expand within the 2026 Legislative Agenda. These include:

- The importance of **Medicaid and CHIP** in providing healthcare coverage
- **Workplace violence prevention** and the need for stronger protections for healthcare workers
- Advocacy for **optimal staffing to enhance patient safety**
- Protection for **vulnerable populations**, including individuals experiencing homelessness
- Continued emphasis on **vaccine-preventable disease protection** and public health education

FNA's legislative priorities reflect the collective voice of Florida's nurses — professionals dedicated to promoting safe, equitable, and evidence-based healthcare for all.

If you'd like to learn more about how you can get involved in FNA's Legislative Grassroots Program, go to www.floridanurse.org/Advocacy. ■