Alliance for Nursing Informatics Shares Insights on Standards Development

ANI provided testimony on "Enhancing Standards Adoption by Users"

(Feb. 24, 2009) - Representing more than 5,000 nurses from 26 U.S. nursing informatics organizations that are members of the Alliance for Nursing Informatics, Rosemary Kennedy, MBA, RN, FAAN, testified today during a hearing held by the National Committee on Vital and Health Statistics (NCVHS). Ms. Kennedy is the Chief Nursing Informatics Officer for Siemens Healthcare, ANI Steering Committee member, and a member of the Delaware Valley Nursing Computer Network. Representatives from the American Association of Family Physicians, American Clinical Laboratory Association and the American Hospital Association joined Ms. Kennedy as part of Panel 3 - *Enhancing Standards Adoption by Users.*

During her presentation, this nursing leader discussed standards development and implementation from a nursing perspective by highlighting four topic areas:

- Background on the Alliance for Nursing Informatics
- Recent healthcare IT standards development, selection, and/or implementation achievements and enabling processes
- Remaining challenges related to healthcare IT standards, development, selection, and/or implementation
- Future model for healthcare IT standards development, adoption, and implementation and necessary key players

Ms. Kennedy noted that nurse informaticists are engaged in all levels of electronic health record standards development, testing and integration, responsibilities that span all aspects of care delivery. She illustrated how these nursing professionals now speak with a unified voice through ANI, a collaboration of organizations, for example, that provided the AHIC Successor with valuable background on the pivotal role of nursing in healthcare. As a result, ANI nurse leaders were appointed to the National eHealth Collaborative board and committees. Nurses also serve on the National Health Information Network Governance Work Group.

"ANI provides an immediate link and communication channel to nursing experts who can provide standards specification input and subject matter expertise," explained Ms. Kennedy. Throughout her presentation, she provided examples of nurses' involvement in other organizations including:

- Health Level 7
- Healthcare Information Technology Standards Panel
- Integrating the Healthcare Enterprise

- International Health Terminology Standards Development Organization (IHTSDO)
- International Standards Organization Technical Committee 215 (ISO TC 215)
- SNOMED

"Nurses provide a strategic balance to these initiatives based on their involvement in and perspective on patient care," said Joyce Sensmeier, MS, RN-BC, CPHIMS, FHIMSS, Vice President, Informatics for HIMSS. "Their contributions are a vital component of standards development and implementation with these organizations and healthcare settings throughout the United States."

As healthcare reform moves ahead with the passing of the American Recovery and Reinstatement Act, standards for the secure exchange of patient health information must be confirmed by the end of 2009, according to the legislation. With that in mind, Ms. Kennedy offered additional recommendations for including the integration of standards within a broader framework for health information exchange that includes decision support and workflow processes.

"Nurses are affecting change in the development and adoption of interoperable systems across the nation, showing quantifiable impact on national health," said Ms. Kennedy. "Combined collaboration between all stakeholders is needed to develop, adopt, and integrate standards into practice. The healthcare environment is ready to adopt standards and they are seeking tools, methods, and success stories to move forward in improving the health of the nation."

Visit the HIMSS Web site to view the presentation by Ms. Kennedy.

Learn more about the Alliance for Nursing Informatics, which is sponsored by the American Medical Informatics Association and the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society.

This is the first of several hearings held by the NCVHS to gather information on how to improve the processes for developing, selecting, and implementing health care informatics standards. Find out more about the hearings.

About Alliance for Nursing Informatics
ANI, cosponsored by AMIA and HIMSS, represents more than 5,000 nurse informaticists and brings together 26 distinct nursing informatics groups in the United States. ANI crosses academia, practice, industry, and nursing specialty boundaries and works in collaboration with the nearly 3 million nurses in practice today.

Visit *http://www.allianceni.org/ for more information.*