

Political Action Resources

FILM—"Nursing: The Politics of Caring"

This is a 22 minute, 16mm, color documentary released in 1978 by Ilex Films. It explores the evolution of nurses' attitudes toward their work, their relationship with the medical profession, and their right to take an active role in the shaping of health care in America. Nurses across the country are shown at work and in discussion, sharing their views on nursing identity and practice in the complex health care system of today. The topics include the following: nursing image, professionalism, extended and/or expanded nursing roles, collective bargaining, medical dominance, and political action for nursing and the consumer. The film focuses on controversial statements which reflect both work-related and personal concerns of nurses. For further information contact: Ilex Films, P.O. Box 226, Cambridge, MA 02138.

NURSES' COALITION FOR ACTION IN POLITICS

The Nurses' Coalition for Action in Politics (N-CAP) is the political arm of the American Nurses' Association. It works to elect congressional candidates of both major parties who are committed to the improvement of health care. In order to comply with laws governing political activity, it is separately organized and has its own board of trustees. In contrast, ANA functions directly as the lobbying group for nursing. Through its government relations program it seeks to influence federal legislation affecting nurses and health care.

N-CAP's functions are (1) to further the political education of nurses and encourage them to become involved in the political process; and (2) to raise funds and make contributions to political candidates who have demonstrated support on issues important to nurses and good health care.

State nursing political action committees (PACs) established by state nurses' associations are separate from N-CAP and

encourage political action by nurses on the state level. They promote political education and endorse and contribute funds to candidates for state office. State PACs and N-CAP are active respectively on state and national levels in the interest of good government and improved health care. N-CAP provides information to help states establish and operate political action groups. To date, there are nursing PACs in 34 states.

N-CAP endorsed and supported political candidates for the first time in 1976. Of 189 supported, 173 were elected. In 1978 elections, N-CAP endorsed and supported 231 congressional candidates of whom 199 won.

Through publications, exhibits and how-to-do-it information, N-CAP encourages nurses to register to vote, to become delegates to national party conventions, to become directly involved in political campaigns and to run for elective office.

For further information, contact your state nurses' association or American Nurses' Association, Inc., Government Relations Division, 1030 15th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20005.