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## **MDCH Establishes Michigan Nursing Education Council** *Council will help implement nursing education goals in Michigan*

Lansing – The Office of the Chief Nurse Executive (OCNE) within the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) recently established the Michigan Nursing Education Council (MNEC), a leadership group that will be the driving force behind the transformation of nursing education in Michigan.

The 17-member council - a mix of nursing educators, nursing practitioners and policy makers - will act as an advisory board to the OCNE to ensure that recommendations developed by the MDCH Task Force on Nursing Education are implemented. Some of the recommendations include creating a system of nurse residency programs in Michigan for all newly licensed graduates, giving high priority to quality and safety in all nursing education programs and increasing the number of registered nurses educated in the state.

“There can be no more a critical time for the effective work of the Michigan Nursing Education Council,” said MDCH Director Janet Olszewski. “We must have a new generation of nurses prepared for practice in a time of massive demand for care of the aging baby boomers.”

The growing nursing shortage is a looming public health crisis in Michigan. There are a total of 156,161 nurses licensed in the state but there will be a shortage of 18,000 nurses by 2015. More nursing faculty, whose average age in Michigan is 55 years old, will be retiring causing a shortage of instructors. In fact, many Michigan nursing schools report more than half of their faculty are eligible to retire today.

“I am excited about the creation of this council and I’m looking forward to working with them to help increase the number of nurses in Michigan and to continue to make quality and safety a number one priority in patient care,” said Chief Nursing Executive Jeanette Klemczak. “This council will help create a path to bring more national public and private resources to our work in Michigan.”

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