As more and more California nurses including case managers are required to physically or electronically communicate with patients, family and care providers across state lines to facilitate patient care, the need for multi state license becomes more urgent. The Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC), sponsored by the National Counsel of State boards of Nursing, allows registered nurses (RN) and licensed practical/vocational nurses (LPN/LVN) to have a multistate license, through a streamlined process without additional applications or fees! Our Ca driver’s license is part of a national compact allowing us to drive in any state in the US.

Entry into the Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC) is a legislative process in each state wishing to join the compact. Prior to the legislative process, groups of people and organizations determine a need for reform/change and build coalitions to provide support to demonstrate and advocate for the need for legislation.

Your Multi-State Licensure for CA Nurses Task Force is leading coalition development.
1. Sharing with Nurses and their Professional Associations that the compact is a solution
2. Confirmed the support of the five Ca chapters of Case Management Society of America (CMSA)
3. Confirmed the support of the CA Association of Occupational Nurses
4. Shared the need for reform with CA State Boards of RN’s and LVN’s
5. Shared the need with the CA Hospital Association
6. Shared the need with the CA Center for Connected Health whose mission is policy development for evolving telehealth efficiency.

The Ca Board of RN’s has defined these barriers to preventing their support.
1. Ca requires background and fingerprint checks on all licensees. Not all states require this and Ca does not want to have nurses practice in the state without these checks.
2. Variables in board discipline of violations and complaints among the states.
3. Educational and clinical requirements to obtain a license vary from state to state
4. Concerns about the varying requirements for continuing education among the states
5. Loss of revenue

The nurse unions object to the compact for fear out-of-state nurses will flood the state during strike activities. The model legislation includes language to address this issue.
National Activity:
The National Counsel of State Boards of Nursing is currently revising the compact language to address concerns from the non-compact states. The updated compact should be available to non-compact states for passage in 2016.

Several other professions are discussing the need for compacts and drafting language.

Physicians - The National Federation of Medical Boards - as of Dec 2014, 17 state medical and osteopathic boards have formally endorsed the Compact.

EMS Emergency Services Professionals - draft language due in 2015

Physical Therapists – draft language due in late 2015

Psychologists - draft language being written

And there is talk on a national level of providing licensure protection for physicians providing care across state lines for Medicare patients.

Change is inevitable as state lines become irrelevant in the provision of patient care. The current laws governing licensure have become archaic and barriers to appropriate healthcare provision affecting patient outcomes. Licensure Compacts are a solution.

What can You do to facilitate this process?
1. Learn more about the Compact by reading details in the websites of the organizations listed below.
2. Educate your nurse colleagues
3. Educate your employers
4. Educate other health care providers and associations
5. Join your local CMSA chapter and participate in advocacy activities

To learn more:
National Counsel of State Boards of Nursing          NCSBN.org/nursecompact
Case Management Society of America                   CMSA.org/publicpolicy/msl
National Center for Interstate Compacts              csg.org

Contact:
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