



INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF NURSES IN GENETICS

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Position Statement:

Provision of Quality Genetic Services and Care: Building a Multidisciplinary Collaborative Approach among Nurses, Genetic Counselors, and Other Health Professionals.

Background. The International Society of Nurses in Genetics (ISONG) is a professional nursing organization that strives to address the needs of members in providing genetic and genomic services within the healthcare system of their respective nations. The organization works toward improving appropriate access to high-quality genetic and genomic services for the benefit of individuals, families, communities, and populations affected with and/or at risk for genetic-related conditions (American Nurses Association [ANA] & International Society of Nurses in Genetics [ISONG], 2016; ISONG, 2006, n.d.). Internationally, nurses who specialize in genetics and genomics receive various preparation and fulfill various roles. In the United States, genetic counselors are health professionals with specialized education, training and experience in medical genetics and counseling. The goal of genetic counselors is to help people understand and adapt to the implications of genetic contributions to disease (Calzone et al., 2013; Jenkins & Rodriguez, 2017; National Society of Genetic Counselors, 2021; Resta et al., 2006). In certain nations, advance practice genetic and genomic nurses are licensed professionals with a defined legal scope of practice and specialized education and training in genetics and genomics (Nurse Portfolio Credentialing Commission, 2021). They provide broad-based, holistic care for people's genetic and genomic health, including care for vulnerable and underserved populations (ANA & ISONG, 2016).

Issue. Genetic counselors, advance practice nurses and genetic and genomic nurses at all levels offer essential support to multidisciplinary healthcare teams (ANA & ISONG, 2016; Calzone et al., 2013; Campion et al., 2019; Hegge et al., 2015; Hull et al., 2020; ISONG, 2006; Monsen, 2009). There is a need for close collaboration within the community of healthcare providers to meet the needs of individuals, families, communities and populations as genetics, genomics, pharmacogenomics, and precision health become integral to all aspects of healthcare (Bowdin et al., 2016; Brothers & Knapp, 2018).

Recommendations. It is the position of ISONG that the organization will collaborate internationally and inclusively with all health care providers to promote benchmark genetic and genomic care by:

- respecting and valuing the knowledge, perspectives, contributions, and areas of competence of colleagues and collaborating with them to provide the highest quality of services;
- advocating for genetic and genomic counseling services to be provided by appropriately trained, qualified, competent and credentialed genetic and genomic professionals to serve and protect the public;
- forming and collaborating with multidisciplinary research teams to develop effective, high-quality, evidence-based approaches to genetic and genomic services, including: prevention, screening, diagnostics, prognostics, selection of precision medicine treatment, monitoring of treatment effectiveness, and providing psychosocial support;

- engaging with and leading multidisciplinary teams in research projects to understand the environmental factors and social determinants of health, which influence genetics and genomics relevant to personalized care;
- educating students, health care professionals, insurers, educators, legislators, public health officials, international colleagues, and the public regarding the expanding role of genetics and genomics as integral components in the promotion of the public's health and well-being;
- promoting the inclusion of diverse populations and the provision of precision health for all individuals.

Summary. The International Society of Nurses in Genetics recognizes that their central focus is to support members in providing the highest quality of evidence-based genetic and genomic health care to individuals, families, communities, and populations within their nation. ISONG embraces opportunities to collaborate with all health care providers in research, education, and the provision of high-quality multidisciplinary care.

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