# IHP 610 Project Two Health Policy Issue Scenarios

Read each of the three scenarios in this document. Choose one to focus on for all your Project Two Preparation assignments, due in Modules Three and Seven, as well as your Project Two submission, due in Module Nine.

## Health Policy Issue Option 1: Professional Nursing Licensure and Interstate Compacts

Nurses must complete an accredited nursing program and successfully pass an examination to be eligible for licensure in a state. Each state has a board of nursing that regulates the licensure process for that state. To practice nursing in a particular state, a nurse must have an active license issued by that state’s board of nursing. Some states have entered agreements with other states through a “compact” agreement to recognize nursing credentials among those compact states. However, nurses must still apply for licensure on a state-by-state basis.

You are working as a legislative consultant for the American Nurses Association (ANA). The senior management of the ANA have decided to propose an amendment to the existing interstate compact for professional licensure. They also plan to go a step further and propose a new policy for enabling national licensure for nursing professionals.

Interstate nursing licensure compacts, which enable healthcare providers to more easily apply for and receive permission to practice medicine in other states, are viewed in the healthcare industry as a means of expanding telehealth and telemedicine. Not everyone thinks the licensure compact is a good idea, however. Some say the process creates unnecessary regulatory burdens, whereas others would prefer to see one nationwide license that allows a clinician to practice in any state.

In your presentation, you will present your observations and assessment to the senior management of the ANA to help them in their decision making with regard to pursuing this approach. You should also include the challenges with the current policy, how key stakeholders influence and would be affected by these proposed changes, and legal and ethical considerations that impact decision making.

## Health Policy Issue Option 2: Certificate of Need

A certificate of need (CON) allows a healthcare provider to build a new facility, make other high-dollar capital investments, and develop new services. A process exists in states with CON laws that requires providers to demonstrate a need for these new services and expenditures. The basic assumption of CON regulations is that this regulatory process is an effective healthcare cost control measure. Several decades ago, all states in the United States had CON laws. Today, approximately two-thirds of states still have CON regulations.

You are a legislative consultant based in West Virginia. A hospital in Kenova, West Virginia, is interested in creating a high-quality long-term care facility for elderly patients. After conducting a market study, the hospital administration has identified Kenova as a region where the local healthcare facilities are currently inadequate to meet the existing and expected future demands. The senior management views this new long-term care facility as an opportunity to rectify this concern.

As they begin to develop a business plan, however, they discover the new project will require authorization by the West Virginia Health Facilities & Services Review Board because of the state’s CON laws. In West Virginia, there is a specific CON law established in 1974 that regulates the construction of a wide range of healthcare facilities, including long-term care facilities, hospitals, birthing centers, and dialysis centers.

You are working for the hospital as a legislative consultant on this project. You have been asked to identify the stakeholders and their interest in this entire process to help the hospital’s senior management understand who will be involved in and affected by moving forward with the construction of this facility. Also, you will be responsible for understanding the end-to-end process of obtaining a CON and providing senior management with the information they need to make decisions related to this. Because the process for obtaining CON is somewhat complicated, the hospital administration has highly recommended that you research the required efforts from each stakeholder involved in the process during your assessment.

The hospital administration was also recently informed that in order to obtain a CON, developers of healthcare facilities must apply to the local governmental authorities by making the case for why the community in question would benefit from that new development. However, the exact criteria used to determine whether an application for a CON is approved can differ widely between states. The senior management is unsure what the Health Facilities & Services Review Board’s criteria are for West Virginia, so they have asked for your recommendations on how best to approach these criteria based on your assessment.

In your presentation to the senior management of the hospital, you should explain the process to obtain the CON and how each stakeholder is associated with this initiative. You should also share the legal and ethical considerations involved in this process.

## Health Policy Issue Option 3: Adult Immunization

*Vaccine hesitancy* refers to the refusal by an individual or group to seek available communicable disease vaccines. This hesitancy can be the result of lack of information, misinformation, distrust of government agencies, or religious or political beliefs. Public health challenges arise when the rights of individuals with regard to vaccine acceptance are in conflict with the overall health of the public.

You are a legislative consultant hired by the governor’s office in your state. Your supervisor—the governor’s special advisor on health—has asked you to explore the perspective and rationale of each stakeholder with regard to requiring adult immunizations for certain state-funded jobs. Your supervisor has also asked you to analyze the impact of each key stakeholder and interest group on the potential success or failure of this process.

Vaccines are proven to be effective in preventing disease and mortality. They are the premier achievement of public health programs in the United States and internationally. However, unlike childhood vaccinations, which are more highly regulated and are administered unless there is a documented exemption, adults over the age of 18 have the option to decline vaccines for any reason, documented or otherwise. Certain state-regulated licensing boards require these immunizations in order to earn or maintain a license, but there are currently no laws or policies at the federal or state level that require adults to be vaccinated with adult-only immunizations.

The state government recently conducted a survey to understand the potential reasons for adults choosing not to be vaccinated with adult-only immunizations. In your state, 39% of adults over the age of 18 have not had one or more adult vaccinations recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

In your presentation, you are asked to share your assessment and analysis of potential barriers to the adult immunization, the impact of each key stakeholder and interest group on the potential success or failure this policy, and your recommendation for whether adult immunizations should be required for certain state-funded jobs.