



Past Event: 2025 NCSBN Annual Meeting - CEO's Address Video Transcript

Event

2025 NCSBN Annual Meeting

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Presenter

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So, look, it is absolutely an honor to be here with you once again at NCSBN's annual meeting. I'm so excited to be here with you. As I think about and I look out here among all of you, I am both honored and actually humbled. When you think about the number of nurse leaders in this room who have an absolute unique focus on public protection, it is an amazing moment.

And, you know, I want to take the first few minutes, and I'm not sure where she's at, she's way over there, but I want to talk just a little bit on what Phyllis said this morning. Phyllis, wow, the energy you showed was absolutely amazing. The way you talked about us being united, the lifting up, the making each other better.

Phyllis, I don't know if you caught it. That is the very heart and the very essence of One NCSBN. That is really what it's all about. And what I want to do, though, today, is to go a little deeper on that topic, to actually define it.

The geek measurement guy in me says, if you can't define it, you can't measure it. And so, I'm going to put a little science back in the say, you got to be able to define this, right? And so, I want to go just a little bit deeper and try to define what we really mean. How do we put it in action? How do we make it real?

Oh, yeah, and I actually am using a clicker today. And you know how well I do with this, right? All of you have been around long enough... No, I don't do well with it, right? Okay. We'll try to keep it in the right space here. You know, last year, those of you were in this room last year, I actually challenged you to do something.

If you don't remember, think about how uncomfortable you felt. Because I bet, most of you felt uncomfortable when I challenged you to do this. And that was to critically examine your paradigms, your perspectives, your long-held assumptions about nursing regulation, to actually scrutinize nursing regulation as it is and envision what it should be in the future, recognizing this important point.

And that is that every one of us in this room serve as a guardrail for public protection. And admitting, being humble enough to admit that maybe, just maybe, some of our practices have become barriers to regulation of the future.

And it's amazing. You have you rose to that challenge. And I'm impressed. You rose with such dedication and deep and thoughtful insight in conversations that I've had with many of at the mid-year at the summit during the listening tours, during the focus groups.

The conversations that I've had with the board of directors have been an absolute inspiration to me. So much so, and in keeping with our promise of One NCSBN, you're going to love this those of you, we took that same challenge to our staff.

We called them blue sky sessions. And in that, we had almost 100 staff participate in-person or virtually, in which we challenged staff, both individually and collectively, to actually examine their assumptions about the work they do in relation to nursing regulation, to actually question their practices, their processes, to envision what their work might be like if they went beyond traditional boundaries and sometimes self-imposed boundaries.

What would the future look like? And undergirding that entire exercise was this question. We said to them, look, just stop and think, you're driving your car, you're taking a shower.

You are having what I call the water cooler talk. Now, everybody in here knows what I'm talking about, right? That's where you as leaders don't get to hear what the staff are telling you. They're telling to each other and you're going with, "You just tell me, I could do something about that." No, but those moments, right?

In those moments, there's that moment in that shower where you go like, "If NCSBN would just...if they would just..." And you would fill in that blank. When you're talking at the water cooler, if NCSBN would just... And so, we called it the blue sky, but undergirding with this thing, if NCSBN would just... And here's what I know, throughout this next year, we're going to give you an opportunity on a number of occasions to answer that question.

And I think there's great value in that exercise. Really? There's great value. For instance, just right now, think for just a second, just a second, how would you fill it in right now? What I'm going to tell you is that your willingness to actually examine that, that moment, examine it.

Your willingness to question and evolve. To envision nursing regulation beyond traditional, and again, self-imposed boundaries. You know what happens?

That right there is when we actually are able to reach innovative regulatory solutions. And that is what makes NCSBN a flagship of regulatory excellence wherever you're at. And just think about what we've accomplished this year. Congratulations, for the first time in history, in our history, you should be very proud, we now have 100%.

Every regulatory body in United States is now participating in nurses license verification. Yeah, give yourself an applause. Absolutely. This is a great moment. Pennsylvania went live just before this meeting and California then will go live in December. And that we will now be 100% in participation.

But you know what? This actual work right here didn't stop there. We have actually, as of this date, launched nurses in Canada as well. Yes.

This work was One NCSBN, and with our Canadian members, we work collaboratively. Our IT experts worked with the of British Columbia College of Nursing Midwifery, the College of Nurses of Ontario.

We work collaboratively over a number of years to launch this. And there are currently three regulatory bodies in Canada already live with a goal of having the majority of those live before we get back here next year. That is a great accomplishment. Love this one.

If you haven't stopped by the JNR booth, you should do it. But here is a great achievement as well, we now have moved to number two. Out of 192 journals, we're ranked number 2. We were four last year. This is what one NCSBN looks like in action because that didn't happen because of one person.

That happened because there was synergy between our research team, our marketing team, our expert reviewers, our editorial boards. This is a great achievement. Next year, we'll see if we can make it number one. You just saw this video, but what you didn't hear in this video is, look at that number.

When did we release this? April, 1.1 billion impressions across the media, TV, radio, 1.1 billion. That is an amazing work that you have all got us to, because we didn't get that data without your help.

We didn't do that research without your help, 1.1 billion. I'm going to probably still... Where are you at? Nancy Spector, you're somewhere. I'm going to steal your thunder for just a minute, sorry. I know you're going to talk about this later.

You have a booth out there, but this is a great moment, too. We will be launching our inaugural dashboard for the nursing education database, national nursing education database. Why is this important? Not because it's just a fun dashboard, but because it actually has been built with various sophisticated statistical tools that will allow you and us, at your jurisdiction level, at your national level, to actually understand how different characteristics impact the performance of your education programs.

Congratulations. We didn't get this data from anywhere. Thirty six boards are now participating in this. And the rest of you, come along. Join us. It will be a very valuable tool for you. Love this one because it's home for me, right?

But our examination team had around 42 subject matter panels this year. That almost accounts for one a week. And you know what else accounts for? Is that means, in terms of One NCSBN, more than 420 expert-nurse experts participated in this, resulting in 4,600 new items, and almost 21,000 items reviewed.

That is a lot of work, but that is also a great accomplishment. Customer experience. What a great team.

And what has been happening here is really amazing. We've started to add AI chatbot behind this that helps. We are continuing to set standards above those of other businesses or not for profits. We have an almost 88% customer satisfaction rate for people interacting with our customer experience. But more importantly, in my opinion, we have an 85% tickets resolved on first contact.

You come here, you get your solution solved because we are one NCSBN. And we know, all of us in the cyber age, data security is really, really, really important. And we need to make sure you're trusting us with your data, the National Nurse Database.

You're trusting us with your nurses data. We need to make sure that you can trust us. And so, we went through the cybersecurity team that we have, went through a rigorous process all across the council, and were awarded this year certification in GovRAMP. So, you can be certain that we are meeting the highest standards of protecting your data.

Also, you should clap about it. And last but not least, our brand campaign this year reached more than 260 million impressions across TV. Look down at the bottom.

We're not talking about just any TV. We have been across major networks. We've been across major television shows, internet, everywhere. And that is almost more than 100 million from last year at this time. And here's what's interesting, I can assure you from talking to people... By the way, how many have seen it?

See it on TV. Yeah. Well, okay. How many people have called you and said, "Is this you? Did you see this?" Yeah, I get that a lot. I think that's great because we are being known. And what I was trying to get is they're not just seeing it.

When I hear this, the message is resonating with them. Every moment matters. And that is what has happened because of One NCSBN. And so, what I am convinced of without a doubt, this that you just saw here is only a partial list. I can't tell you of all the other things.

The list is much longer than we... As Phyllis said, we have been busy. But I can tell you that I do not believe for a minute that this partial list was some element of just isolated successes. It wasn't dumb luck. It wasn't just individual victory so somebody could jump up and say, "Look what I did."

No, that's not what this was. You know what this was? This was the systematic result of an operation philosophy that we've adopted that turns individual expertise into collective excellence. That is in One NCSBN in action.

You know, Phyllis captured this very well. And I'm going to keep coming back to this because I love the last bullet she made here. And that is, look, One NCSBN, it lifts us up. That's correct.

It makes us better. But here is probably the underpinning of the whole thing, and that is, we give back something to something bigger than ourselves. And so, we use the one the words One NCSBN very frequently these days, right? And I think that's great. But it still feels to me like a little bit of an abstract concept.

And so, I want to make sure we can actually define it before we leave here. We've been working with the staff to define it so we can tell you what we believe it is. Well, how do we make it real? And so, once again, you'll see a pattern in the way Phil thinks.

He goes, so here's how you got to do this, One NCSBN is blank. You saw that earlier, right? In a different way. How do you fill in that blank? And if I have to fill in that blank, the best way that I would say to fill in that blank is, One NCSBN is our operating philosophy.

It helps us to... Let me say it a different way. Look, it's not a slogan. That's a concept, a slogan. It's how we function. It's how we function as a team. And I think that the way I would like to say that is that it actually unites us around our collective purpose, all of us.

That mission. One of the important things it does is it helps us put our guardrails on how we determine priorities of our work, what we will do, what we won't do. It helps us define how we interact with each other. And to understand how we get to that next level of defining it, the way that I believe that we need to do that is we have to look at four... Oh, you love this.

Paradigms again. You got to look at four paradigms or perspectives and they're right here on the screen. But we've got to start thinking about how we see this organization, how we, not how does anybody else. How do we see our organization in relation to the world? How do we see ourselves in this room in relation to our mission?

How do we see our work in related to our mission? And how do we see ourselves in relation to each other? And if you start digging down into these paradigms, you'll actually come up with what we now have defined as the four pillars of One NCSBN, something new, something to take back.

But I want to talk about them briefly. The four pillars are duty, unity, priority, and synergy. I'm going to start with duty. Duty is recognizing this organization's profound responsibility in the world.

That's our duty. We protect the public and the trust in nursing. But here's the important thing about understanding, that's not what we do, that's why we exist.

That is a big paradigm shift. Not what we do, why we exist, why we are even here, why we get energetic about these things. And I want to give you some examples or, at least, one example to make it real to you. Think about this, when we're collecting data, when Brendan over there and his team are collecting data, when the exam team is collecting data, when nurses is collecting data, we're not just collecting a piece, an item of data.

We're not just analyzing that data. We're not just conducting research. You know what it is? We understand that we are providing intelligence that helps shape health care policy, influence workforce planning, impacts patient care, and most importantly, protects the public.

We know that policymakers, health care organization, nursing regulatory boards, nurse leaders, you in this room, are looking to us for data to help you make critical decisions.

We actually understand duty in a way that is probably different than you see in a dictionary. Duty is not merely completing list for us, not completing a list of tasks. Duty to us is advancing a mission that touches every community, every family, every nurse, and every patient.

The second pillar we call unity. And unity is embracing our shared mission as the foundation of absolutely everything we do. There is nothing more than that compass point for us. That means what we do is we see ourselves as partners in a shared mission, not individuals, not teams, not departments, not regulatory bodies in competition with one another.

When we work together, that's when we speed up, if you will, innovation. And that's when regulatory excellence flourishes.

In the words of Phil Jackson, the famed... Okay, he may not be famed to those either somewhere of another team. I got that, all right. But I'm going to call him the famed, the famed coach of the Chicago Bulls. He said it this way, and I thought it was really great because I really respect him as a coach...

But he said that the strength of a team is its members. The strength...and catch he put another word in here, the individual strength of its members is the team. That is how we get to unity.

Our individual strength combined as a team. The third is priority. Our work, the paradigm of our work. And what we do here is, we need to make sure that we align every effort. Everything we do is focused on what's most important. That is our mission.

And our members above all else. What does that allow us to do? What it allows us to do is to make deliberate and informed decisions on where we spend our time, our energy, and our resources.

What it also does is it allows us to be just as deliberate and just as informed in determining what we will not do. Daniel Boone, the U.S. frontiersman and an explorer, I think I'm going to paraphrase him. He put it this way, when you have a critical priority, it's like setting the needle of your compass.

Once it's there, there is only one point. And that point will take you through the darkest night and the fiercest storm to success. That's what we've got to do.

The last of those pillars is synergy. Synergy is actually building trust and collaboration, understanding that there are things that we can accomplish together that none of us could accomplish alone. Stephen Covey, author, puts it this way, and I think it's a really great definition, What is synergy?

He said, synergy is when 1 plus 1 equals 10, 100, 1,000. He said, synergy is the profound result when two or more respectful human beings go beyond preconceived ideas and notions to collectively meet a challenge.

For us, that's the same thing. Synergy is when we allow individual ideas, individual solution sets to flow equally across teams, departments, regulatory bodies.

Why? So when that challenge comes, we already have the best set of information and solutions to be successful and meet any challenge. And so, I want you to know this, One NCSBN is not fundamentally about working nicely together.

You go, "Well, that sounds like what you're talking about." No, no, no. But by the way, that is a good thing. Don't get me wrong. But that is not One NCSBN. One NCSBN is realizing, it's an operating philosophy that realizes that there are things that are only possible when we do them together. It is our operating philosophy that we've implemented this year.

It is the way we think. It is the way we work. It is the way we deliver on our mission of protecting the public and leading regulatory excellence. And I want you to think about it this way, if that is all true, and it is, what is this going beyond?

Anybody got that and figured out, yet? What do we mean going beyond? Here's what we mean. When I talk about going beyond, I'm not talking about doing more. I am not even talking about working harder. No, it's about achieving those things that might be seem impossible, but become possible because we do those together.

And I want to give you an example of that right now. Where am I at on time? Oh, I'm good. All right. I thought I was rambling. The exam team is demonstrating, right now, as far as I'm concerned, they're demonstrating One NCSBN and the concept of going beyond. They're going beyond, not to just make the exam the best in the world, but to deliver it in ways we never thought possible before.

They're not just maintaining standards, they're re-imagining possibilities in assessments. And here's the key to all of that, yay, for exams. I get it. But the real key to this is, this is happening not because we have one individual or one team with a brilliant idea.

No, that isn't why it's working. Here's why it's working, because the teams across the council understand their role in a bigger picture. They trust the expertise across the teams and they're working together to reach shared excellence. Now, I want you to imagine what you could do if you took these same four, duty, unity, priority, synergy back to your work, back to your staff, back to your board.

You see, because what I want you to understand is, this isn't just something that works at NCSBN. This operating philosophy, these pillars will work anywhere that nursing regulatory excellence matters.

And that's where you sit every day. And so, as we look ahead, we know certain things. One that is really interesting is we know that the health care landscape, the environment is changing rapidly. We've said that before, but it's also changing unpredictably.

We can't even know from 24 hours what is getting ready to happen. And that puts unprecedented challenges on every one of you as nurse regulators. So, we are going to be entering in our strategic cycle, October, Phyllis told you about that. And what I want to tell you about that is what I think needs to happen.

So, as we begin that new strategic cycle, we know a few things. We know that we are going to have to ensure, through collaboration, innovation, thought, communication, that the APR in compact is successful. We are going to need to continue to produce tools, processes, programs, and metrics, that you as regulatory board regulatory boards can use to become more efficient, but more importantly, to demonstrate that you in your area are the exemplars of regulatory excellence.

We are going to need to reimagine ICRS so that it meets the needs of your staffs, your boards, not just your board president, not just your EO, but that entry level staff member who is starting their career in regulation.

Why? Because they're the leaders of tomorrow, and you start mentoring them today. And we need to make sure that we're providing tools to ensure that your legacy and One NCSBN goes far into the future. We know that we are going to have to, if we want to stay successful, we cannot ignore that we have to ensure this council has a financial, stable resources, that includes its bank account.

We have to ensure that we are financially stable so we can meet the needs of One NCSBN. We have to ensure we have a governance structure that is strong, that embraces One NCSBN, and is fit for the future. You know, one thing I do know is that we have something that makes us unique to any other groups like ours I've seen, and that is, we have each other.

And you are amazing. And I love that you are that engaged these days. That makes things easier. And so, this is what I would like to see as we enter that cycle of strategy planning, I'd like to ask... And this, by the way, is to all of you.

And the board of directors hasn't heard this. So, by the way, board of directors, I'm going to unload something on you, which wouldn't be the first time I've done that, but I'm going to do it right now. I want to make sure, I want to be able to promise you that we will do three things. One, that we will start

every new product with this question, how do we do that as One NCSBN? Every new product will start with that question.

Secondly, every challenge will start with this question, what expertise do we need to bring together to meet that challenge? And third, we will use this question for every opportunity that comes our way. Before we say yes or no, we will ask this question, how does this advance our mission?

You see, Phyllis had it right, we do lift each other up. We do make each other better. But more importantly, we give back to something bigger than ourselves, our job to protect the public and the trust in nursing.

And so, I want you to know that if we would do those things that Phyllis has put out there, if we do the things I've talked about, if we do them consistently, both strategically and operationally, we won't just meet expectations, my friends, we will go beyond, way beyond.

And so, NCSBN isn't just about how we work, it's how we lead to success. It's how we innovate together. It is how we go beyond together. I will tell you this story, also a Chicago story, sorry, guys. Michael Jordan.

So, Michael Jordan, he and the Chicago Bulls were playing the Cleveland Cavaliers. And it was a great night for Michael. In fact, it was a career record night. In overtime, they beat the Cleveland Cavaliers, sorry, Ohio, and he scored 69 points in a single game. What is little known about that game is there was a rookie named Stacy King.

Stacy King got a few minutes of play and he scored one point. After the game, the reporters were crowded around Michael Jordan. They wanted to know about Michael Jordan's 69 points. One LA Time reporter was at the back of the crowd and could not get to the front to talk to Michael.

She looks across the court, and sitting on a bench over there is Stacy King. What a brilliant guy. Because I know the punch line. That's why I'm laughing. So, you got to wait for it. I will deliver it.

I promise. But she walks over to that bench and she starts to ask Stacy King, "What about tonight's game and Michael's great performance?" Stacy King, without missing a beat, says this, "You know what? I will remember this night as the night Michael Jordan and I scored 70 points to win the game." So, here's my point to you, whether you're Michael Jordan or whether you're Stacy King does not matter in One NCSBN.

You know what? Whether you're Michael or whether you're Stacy, here's what we're going to do, we will combine our talents and we will win the game. And so, I'm going to leave you with these words. I don't see anybody going to stretch, right?

Because I've got another story. Oh, I'm kidding. All right. So I won't stretch. I'll make sure you get to lunch in time. Here's the thing, I want to leave you these words, Mahatma Gandhi, "The future depends on what we do in the present. The future depends on what we do now." I think Gandhi's words are a powerful reminder that our mission, our mission is not something reserved for the future.

It's something that happens now by the choices we make. It's a reminder that if we want a future, the way we want that future, we must create it. One NCSBN, one mission, one unstoppable force for nursing regulatory excellence.

Thank you very much.