THE ROLE OF A DNP-PREPARED NURSE IN INFLUENCING LEGISLATION IN GEORGIA: COMPASSIONATE CARE FOR VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

2019 TWELFTH NATIONAL DOCTORS OF NURSING PRACTICE CONFERENCE

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BILL SIGNING: STARTING WITH THE ACHIEVED OUTCOME

(State of Georgia, 2016)

Rape kit bill that was nearly blocked now set to become Georgia law

By Greg Bluestein - The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Posted: 4:20 p.m. Monday, April 25, 2016

It had the overwhelming support of bipartisan lawmakers, buy-in from law enforcement and hospital groups, and backing from Gov. Nathan Deal. And yet legislation to require police to find and count untested sexual assault evidence almost didn't become law in Georgia this year.

The rape kit bill, which Deal is set to sign into law Tuesday, proves yet again that even the most seemingly innocuous proposals can stir up major controversy under the Gold Dome.

"You get personalities involved. You get personal feelings involved. You get power struggles — I've seen it happen over and over again," said George Hooks, a legislative historian who spent 32 years in the state Senate. "Sometimes that gets good legislation blocked. This time it didn't."

The legislation was spurred in part by an Atlanta Journal-Constitution investigation last year that found more than 1,400 kits went untested at Grady Memorial Hospital — even though victims wanted them transferred to law enforcement. Police had failed to pick them up, and the hospital was keeping them on the mistaken belief that federal regulations barred their release.

Legislators from both parties soon co-sponsored House Bill 827 to require for the first time that law enforcement officials collect the rape kits within 96 hours of the tests, and it called for a new statewide report detailing the number of kits analyzed — and those still awaiting a test. The measure was named "The Pursuing Justice for Rape Victims Act."

It seemed on the fast track after it breezed through the House on a 160-0 vote in late February, but it was blocked in the state Senate by state Sen. Renee Unterman, a Buford Republican who surprised, then enraged, supporters of the bill by digging in as the pressure mounted.

(Bluestein, 2016)

A FOUNDATION FOR DNP-PREPARED NURSES ENGAGING IN ADVOCACY

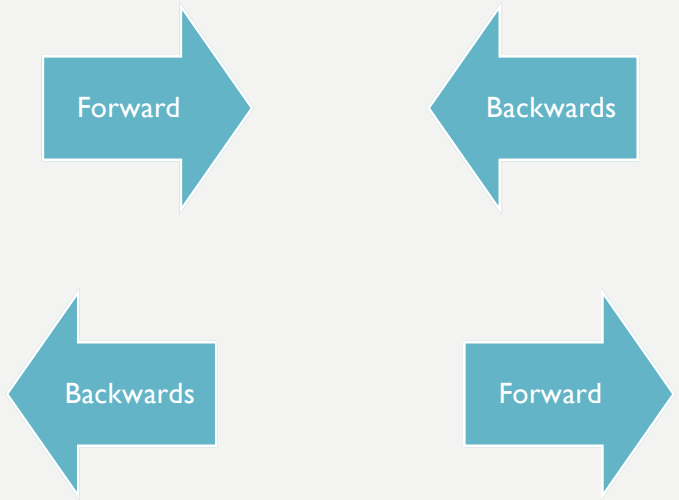
- In the USA, the branches of government are the Executive, Judicial and Legislative branches.
- DNP-prepared nurses can be engaged in all the branches of government in many different types of roles.
- This presentation will primarily focus on the legislative advocacy.
- DNP-prepared nurses must identify opportunities to assess, design, evaluate and implement health policy based on the current healthcare and legislative landscape (Bates, 2016).
- What keeps you up at night? Where is your passion focused?

IMPORTANCE OF NURSES ADVOCATING FOR SEXUAL ASSAULT SURVIVORS

(End The Backlog, 2019)

- Sexual assault and abuse survivors interact with the health care system not only for medical care but also for evidence collection.
- Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE) are registered nurses who have specialized education and have completed clinical preparation to prepare them to provide medical forensic care of for patients who have experienced sexual assault or abuse (International Association of Forensic Nurses, n. d).
- End the Backlog is a national, state and local issue.
- A bigger issue to consider is what are the foundation of civil society? This question leads to a question of how does the practice of nursing interact with ethics?

POLITICS AND ADVOCACY



FORWARD AND BACKWARDS INFILTRATION THEORY

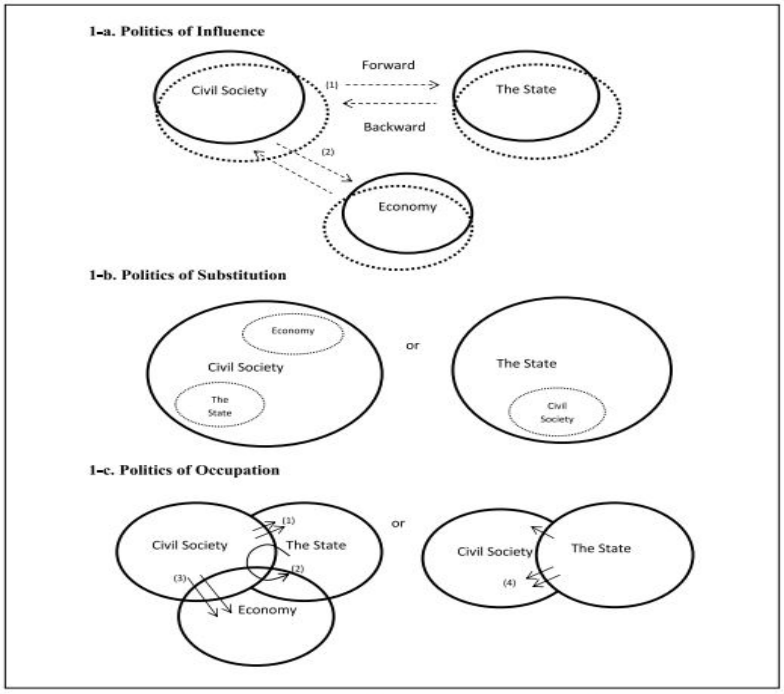


Figure 1. Two Modes of Infiltration: Three Modes of the State-Civil Society Boundary-Making[4]

(Klein & Lee, 2019)

KLEIN AND LEE'S FORWARD AND BACKWARD INFILTRATION THEORY

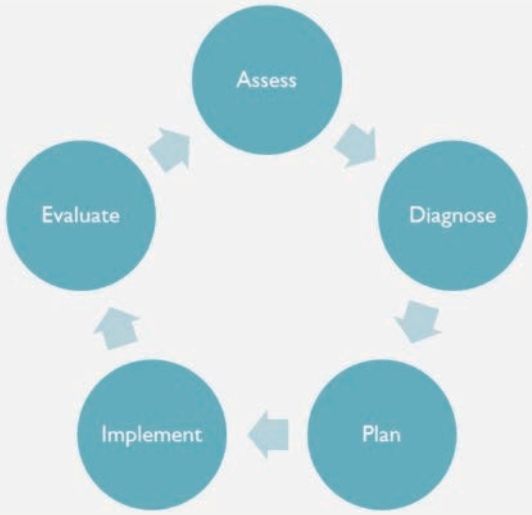
- A dynamic theory of civil society
- Forward Infiltration
- Politics of Influence- Influence formal political and economic actors through advocacy, lobbying, providing information
- Politics of Substitution- Society infiltrates the state by shrinking the state sector through society's capacity for self-organization and volunteerism
- Politics of Occupation- Systematic entrance of representatives of civil society and civic associations into critical state or economic realms

(Klein & Lee, 2019)

THE POLITICS OF INFLUENCE IN FORWARD MOTION

YOU HAVE TO START SOMEWHERE!

- Many schools have a policy course, but the "nuts and bolts" of advocacy that leads to policy change are not covered.
- We have a nursing process that can also be applied to the world of advocacy.
- Getting your foot in the door is sometimes the most daunting part.
- Finding a policy mentor or a program that teaches "boots on the ground" work with legislators is immensely helpful.
- Intentional use of jargon here– it is important to speak like a real person instead of an academician or doctorally-prepared provider sometimes.



The Nursing Process

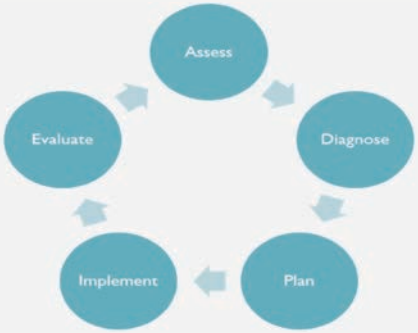
ONE EXAMPLE OF AN ADVOCACY EDUCATION PROGRAM: THE GEORGIA WOMEN'S POLICY INSTITUTE

GWPI is a leadership, advocacy and civic engagement training for women from diverse backgrounds. GWPI Fellows meet over the course of one year for education, team building, and hands-on learning, as they work collaboratively on a real world policy project that impacts the lives of women and girls in Georgia.

(YWCA of Greater Atlanta, n.d.)

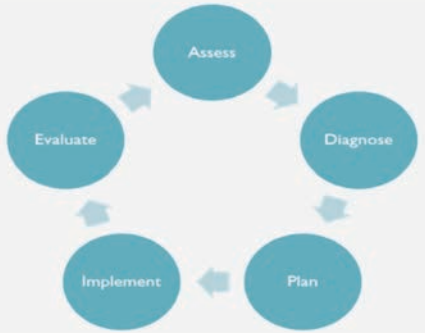
THE POLITICS OF INFLUENCE IN FORWARD MOTION

- Assessing the problem
  - GWPI fellows meeting with local hospital staff about storage of sexual assault kits, YWCA of Greater Atlanta, 2015



THE POLITICS OF INFLUENCE IN FORWARD MOTION

- Assessing the problem
  - GWPI Fellows meeting with a local police chief, Doraville Police Department, 2016

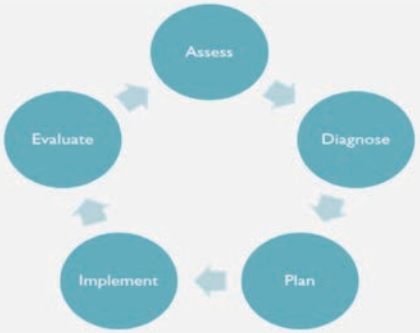


THE POLITICS OF INFLUENCE IN FORWARD MOTION

- Diagnosing the problem
  - GWPI Fellows and Program Director meeting with the GBI Lab Director, Georgia Bureau of Investigation, 2015

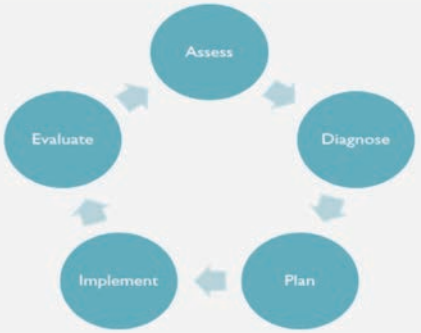
THE POLITICS OF INFLUENCE IN FORWARD MOTION

- Making a plan
  - GWPI Fellows and Program Director meeting with a state senator who is also a nurse, Georgia State Capitol, 2016



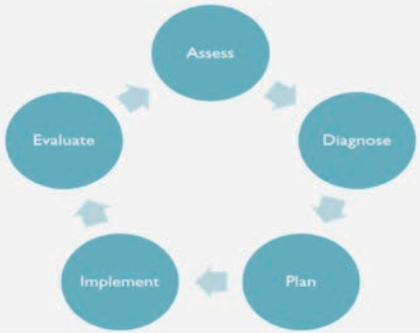
THE POLITICS OF INFLUENCE IN FORWARD MOTION

- Making a plan
  - GWPI Fellows meeting with the Governor's Criminal Justice Coordinating Council at the State Bar of Georgia, 2016



THE POLITICS OF INFLUENCE IN FORWARD MOTION

- Implement a solution
  - SB 304 Compassionate Care for Victims of Sexual Assault: A house bill becomes a senate bill, Georgia State Capitol, 2016



THE POLITICS OF INFLUENCE IN FORWARD MOTION

Georgia rape kit backlog finally cleared, 321 link to other crimes

allongeorgia.com/georgia-state-news/georgia-rape-kit-backlog-finally-cleared-321-link-to-other-crimes/

November 19, 2018

Though some sat for nearly two decades and it took a legislative action by the Georgia General Assembly, the rape kit backlog in Georgia has finally been cleared.

The Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI) says over 3,000 kits that were previously found to be untested have all undergone lab tests by the agency. Some of the kits had been sitting for 15 years.

The GBI made the announcement Friday, nearly three years since the state legislature passed the initiative spearheaded by Democratic State Representative Scott Holcomb.

The agency also reported that the kit results produced evidence linking 321 cases to suspect sin other crimes. Further, two serial rapists were discovered.

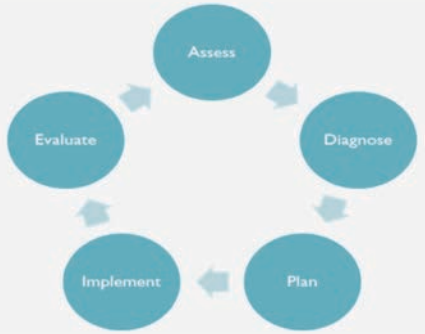
"The Georgia Bureau of Investigation has done an incredible job processing these kits and working through the evidence," Holcomb said. "It has always been about pursuing justice for victims. Now, we look forward to additional prosecutions to bring justice forward."

The new law, in addition to clearing the backlog, requires police departments to submit rape kits to the GBI within 30 days of the colleciton.

The GBI reportedly receives roughly 250 new sexual assault kits from law enforcement agencies around the state to test each month.

(Szilagyi, 2018)

- Evaluate the process
  - 3000 kits tested that had been untested.
  - Kits linked 321 cases to suspects in other crime



THE POLITICS OF INFLUENCE IN BACKWARDS MOTION

$$I_P = \sum_{i=1}^{N} m_i r_i^2$$

(Jones, 2019)

Thoughts to consider

- Inertia
- People in power may not support
- Media coverage
- Intersection between health care, legislative bodies, executive branch of government, and judicial branch of government is complicated
- How do medical issues become partisan politics?

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Choose an issue that you are passionate about
- Identify experiential learning opportunities to actively engage in healthcare policy, politics and advocacy (Bates, 2016).
- Go to your state capitol and national capitol. Entering those buildings is powerful!
- Become civically engaged. Look for leadership programs in the community. The Chamber of Commerce is a great place to interact with leaders.
- Find a policy/advocacy mentor.
- Be a policy/advocacy mentor.
- Find your policy voice!
- Remember social determinants of health. Policies affect our patients' health.. Nurses have problem-solving and relationship building skills that can be used effectively in the policy arena to help us take care of our patients.

A NURSE'S PLACE IS IN THE CAPITOL!

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