



## **Nurses & the Ebola Outbreak October 2014**

Like all nurses across the world, **ANAC members are deeply concerned about the impact of Ebola on global health.** We acknowledge that there are fears and concerns here in the United States. As nurses, we are uniquely positioned to step forward and be informed and educated sources of information for our families, colleagues and communities. Nurses, as the most trusted source of health care information, can and should serve as reliable health educators, doing our best to provide factual information and to counter myths and untruths.

ANAC encourages you to use the factual, evidence-based resources available through the [American Nurses Association](#) and the [CDC](#). ANA is sponsoring a [webinar](#) on **Tuesday, October 28 at 1:00 pm EST** that will focus on preparedness across the spectrum of care, whether a specialized clinical setting, community hospital or primary care setting. ANAC encourages interested members to [register for this webinar](#).

ANAC recognizes echoes of past AIDS hysteria in the intense media coverage that has occurred in the past few weeks about Ebola. We are concerned that the media coverage may bring back traumatic feelings of fear and stigma for some of our patients, as well as for ANAC members who are experiencing parallels in the early public perceptions of these two infectious diseases. We may need to be extra perceptive and supportive now - for our patients, for our colleagues and for ourselves. This is part of the legacy of HIV nursing care and we know how to do this.

ANAC is a global organization, and **we emphasize that nursing is a global profession.** ANAC stands in solidarity with our nurse colleagues in West Africa, who have demonstrated tremendous bravery and commitment to their patients in the face of overwhelming challenges. Their actions of compassion and care are heroic. **In West Africa, nurses continue to care for patients without access to appropriate protective equipment, and they tragically have the highest mortality among all healthcare providers fighting Ebola.** This is a fact that has escaped recent U.S.-based media coverage and attention.

This nursing crisis in West Africa demands our collective attention, and it is critical to effectively addressing Ebola. We know that this epidemic will continue in West Africa for months, long after Ebola has disappeared from the headlines in the U.S.

**ANAC will remain focused on supporting our nurse colleagues in West Africa in the months ahead.** We are currently developing a list of ways in which we can assist and support our global colleagues, including an up-to-date list of volunteer and other opportunities. ANAC will release these opportunities through email announcements, social media and our website.

ANAC encourages you to do what nurses do best - talk to your patients, your families, your friends, your colleagues, your communities. Inform and educate them with compassion and facts. Provide them with accurate information about Ebola, just as you do every day about HIV, a virus that is still surrounded by misinformation, inaccuracies and untruths.