



# National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR)

***"Nursing research examines the biomedical and behavioral processes that underlie health and the environment in which health care is delivered." <sup>1</sup>***

Dr. Ada Sue Hinshaw

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) is the national voice for academic nursing representing more than 890 member schools throughout the country.

AACN member schools educate more than 570,000 students and employ more than 58,000 faculty.

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## OVERVIEW OF NINR

The National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR) is one of 27 Institutes and Centers at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). NINR drives scientific research, a cornerstone of nursing practice, and plays a crucial role in advancing evidence-based interventions, guiding policy, and protecting the nation's health. Supporting NINR, and keeping it as an independent Institute, will ensure ongoing investment for nurse scientists working to shape a healthcare system that is innovative, responsive, and patient-centered.

## UNDERSTANDING THE VALUE OF NINR

Since becoming an independent entity within NIH in 1993, NINR has helped advance community-based care models, especially in underserved areas, while boosting collaboration and championing translational research for health promotion and disease prevention. Below are specific examples that underscore the value of NINR:

- **Ongoing Collaboration:** NINR has a strong history of collaboration and breaking down silos at NIH, which aligns with the holistic approach inherent in nursing education and practice. NINR allows nurse scientists to promote a team-based environment, further enhancing integrated research across other NIH Institutes and Centers.
- **Reinforcing Connection:** The connection between nursing education and research must be safeguarded, as many researchers also serve as faculty, educating students to become tomorrow's frontline providers. This link not only yields mentorship for the next generation of nurse scientists, but also fosters a strong community of nurse researchers addressing patient needs.
- **Preparing the Next Generation of Nurses, Faculty, and Scientists:** Nurse scientists play a vital role in strengthening the healthcare system by shaping nursing education, supporting faculty and nursing schools, and advancing best practices in patient-centered care across the lifespan. Through their research, they build the evidence base for clinical practice, evaluate and improve existing models of care, and develop innovative nurse-led approaches to address evolving health needs.

## NINR BY THE NUMBERS

Nursing is the largest healthcare profession; however, NINR remains underfunded. NINR funds 80% of training grants and 70% of Center grants that support nursing education and research.<sup>2</sup> Despite the high return on investment from nursing research, NINR received \$197.693 million, 0.410% of NIH's \$48.216 billion budget for FY 2026.<sup>3</sup> NINR has consistently comprised only 0.4% of the overall NIH budget since 1997.<sup>4</sup> Projections indicate that NINR needs a fivefold increase, totaling over \$763 million, to adequately fund nursing science.<sup>4</sup> The chart below demonstrates NINR's proportion of total NIH funding:

| Fiscal Year          | NINR Funding (Million \$) | % of Total NIH Budget | Total NIH Budget (Billion \$) |
|----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| FY 1997 <sup>4</sup> | \$59.721                  | 0.469%                | \$12.741                      |
| FY 2007 <sup>4</sup> | \$137.404                 | 0.471%                | \$29.179                      |
| FY 2017 <sup>4</sup> | \$150.273                 | 0.438%                | \$34.301                      |
| FY 2026 <sup>3</sup> | \$197.693                 | 0.410%                | \$48.216                      |

## THE ESSENTIAL WORK OF NINR SCIENTISTS & RESEARCHERS

Through the innovative work of nurse scientists, we've seen significant advancements in healthcare:

- **Low Birthweight Infants:** Nurse scientists developed a transitional care model for early discharges, improving infant health and saving approximately \$18,560 per infant in hospital and physician costs.<sup>5</sup>
- **Automated Device for Asthma Monitoring:** A NINR-supported nurse researcher developed a patented wearable device that continuously and objectively monitors respiratory symptoms via smartphone app to improve asthma self-management.<sup>6</sup>
- **Pressure Sores:** The Braden Scale, created to assess the risk of pressure sores, is now used globally in hospitals and nursing homes, helping save millions in annual healthcare costs.<sup>7</sup>
- **Patient-to-Nurse Staffing:** Research found that each additional patient per nurse significantly increased mortality, length of stay, and readmissions, and that improved staffing could save thousands of lives annually and reduce overall healthcare costs.<sup>8</sup>
- **AI & Data Science:** Established in September 2024, the NINR AI & Data Science Working Group is advancing the use of artificial intelligence in nursing science to drive data-informed solutions that improve care and outcomes.<sup>9</sup>

*"The time is right for the NINR to become a leader in addressing some of the most important healthcare issues facing our society. For the NINR, and for all of nursing science, the possibilities are endless."*<sup>10</sup>

Dr. Patricia Grady

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