

APIN Grant to End, Next Steps Suggested

Over the four-year span of the Academic Progression in Nursing (APIN) grant, an iterative learning process through the APIN grantees and many innovative schools of nursing led to a better understanding of successful academic progression methods. The academic progression pathways across the country have evolved across a continuum, with varying degrees of curricular overlap and related supportive infrastructure. Market forces are recognized to significantly drive progress. *Those pathways with the greatest impact were found to involve partnerships between community colleges and universities, with a tightly integrated curriculum.* An incomparable benefit of these partnerships is utilization of existing educational infrastructure, with nurse educators across institutions working in collaboration.

As the APIN National Program Office (NPO) is scheduled to close in February 2017, lessons learned need to be shared and next steps should be suggested for this important work to continue. A few highlights of key lessons and needed next steps are included here. More details will be shared at the conclusion of the grant.

Key Lessons: Coordinating curriculum between ADN and BSN programs is not sufficient to impact change unless critical partnerships and infrastructure are also addressed. Coordinating curriculum with supportive infrastructure increases impact, but early evidence indicates it will not be sufficient alone, as more students than anticipated do not complete the BSN directly once they have the opportunity to license and begin work. Benefits in addition to altered educational pathways have been realized. Educational transformation has resulted in strengthened partnerships between academic institutions, practice partners, regulators, legislators and business partners. Critical gaps in the available data to evaluate nursing education levels have been identified, and in many cases, addressed.

Needed next steps: Refine and further evaluate outcome data. Identify whether there is a “tipping point” in the continuum in

which a given degree of curricular mesh and infrastructure is found to result in the highest proportion of BSN completion.

The NPO is developing a website that will serve as a directory, including resources to assist schools of nursing and nursing employers with implementation of academic progression models that focus on the strong partnerships between community colleges and universities. The NPO also will be writing and disseminating a comprehensive paper highlighting outcomes from the project, slated to be distributed around the same time as the website launch, late in the first quarter of 2017. ■

Academic Progression in Nursing (APIN) collaborates with state Action Coalitions and their partners to accelerate implementation of promising practices that will help states achieve our goals of seamless academic progression and increasing the number of nurses with a baccalaureate degree to 80 percent of the nursing workforce by 2020. Developing innovative strategies with community colleges, universities and practice partners will ensure that the nursing workforce is prepared to deliver high quality patient care across all practice settings. APIN is a grant initiative of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation in partnership with the Tri-Council for Nursing and administered by AONE.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Tina Gerardi, MS, RN, CAE, is deputy director, Academic Progression in Nursing, AONE, Washington, D.C.



Patricia D. Farmer, DNP, RN, FNP-c is a consultant to the Academic Progression in Nursing program, Fortuna, CA.

➤ CENP, CNML Exam Review Classes Scheduled for 2017

Certified in Executive Nursing Practice (CENP) and the Certified Nurse Manager and Leader (CNML) are premier credentials in nursing leadership. Certification validates the acquisition of knowledge defined in the core competencies and provides assurance within the field and to the public that those who hold these credentials are competent practitioners. Review classes for both exams are scheduled in Baltimore on March 29, in conjunction with the AONE Annual Meeting; class registration opens this month. For more information, visit www.aone.org/certification.