



Academic Credit for Nurse Residency Programs: A Stakeholder-driven Initiative

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As envisioned in the IOM Report on the Future of Nursing, Nurse Residency Programs can offer a strong support for newly licensed RNs, contribute to nurse retention, and can be an important contribution to creating a more highly educated nursing workforce. In Maryland, the number of these hospital-based, one-year programs has grown from 2 in 2012 to 32 in 2016. Approximately, 1600 newly licensed RNs in Maryland complete these programs each year and retention rates of these new hires are impressive at greater than 90%. Our interest in Nurse Residency Programs (NRPs) and potential for academic-practice partnerships as a possible pathway to educational advancement for RNs in Maryland led us to an extensive literature review and a national search for best-practices. The paucity of actual information was astounding. We turned our focus to potential stakeholders and planned a face-to-face Information Exchange to further explore this area with emphasis on the merits of and possible ways of offering academic credit to newly licensed RNs for participation and completion of a Nurse Residency Program. The memberships of the Maryland Deans and Directors of nursing programs group, the Maryland Organization of Nurse Leaders which includes all chief nursing officers of healthcare organizations, nurse educators in the Association for Nursing Professional Development Chesapeake Affiliate, from all nursing programs in Maryland, all hospitals in Maryland, and Maryland Nurse Residency Coordinator's group member and the Maryland Coordinator were invited to attend. A total of 38 of these stakeholders came together and participated in round-table discussions. Questions were formulated in advance by our grant team to guide and generate discussion. The framework for the discussions was "Who, What, Why and How." There was a verbal report-out from each group. There was clear consensus that these leaders felt the best approach was developing academic-practice partnerships to provide academic credit for completion of the NRP. Table scribes documented key aspects of the discussions at the tables with a summary report-out by each of the groups. These results were organized and categorized by the grant team. The information obtained was used to create two online follow-up surveys - one for hospitals, and one for academic institutions. Data collection is currently in the final stages. To date, 28 of the 48 (58%) of the eligible hospitals expressed an interest in forming an academic/practice partnership to further explore this opportunity. Only 3 of the 15 (20%) eligible nursing programs provided responses. Preliminary results from these surveys will be presented with implications for moving forward. We anticipate working with organizations responding to these surveys and are appreciative of the ongoing support of Nurse Support Program II and Maryland nursing leaders in advancing this stakeholder-driven initiative. *Funded by NSPII #16-122