Addressing the Nursing Faculty Shortage in the States

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The current and projected shortage of Registered Nurses (RNs) has been well-documented in the media and the professional literature.

Leading researchers project a shortage of **340,000 nurses by 2020** (Auerbach et al., 2007).

This translates into an RN shortage roughly three times what we are now experiencing across the country.

In Missouri, the vacancy rate for RNs was 7.5% in 2006 according to the Missouri Hospital Association (MHA).
Understanding the Nursing Shortage

- In response to the growing demand of RNs, schools of nursing have worked diligently to expand student enrollments to meet the nation’s nursing needs.

- In fact, entry-level baccalaureate nursing programs have experienced six years of growth in enrollment and graduations.

- Since 2000, data collected through AACN’s annual survey show that enrollments increased by 84% - from 72K to 133K.
Enrollments and Graduations in Generic (Entry-Level) Baccalaureate Nursing Programs, 1993-2006

N of Programs: 408 435\(^1\) 441\(^1\) 439\(^1\) 456 443 455 443 476 487 479 564 577 585
Response Rate: - - - - - - 88% 85% 69% 78% 84% 86% 85% 88% 88% 89%

\(^1\) No denominator data for 1993 - 1996.

Understanding the Nursing Shortage

- Though enrollments are up, schools are still not graduating enough nurses to meet the project demand.

- Even at the current rate of nurse production, the country is now experiencing a shortage of more than 118,000 RNs; this shortage will likely increase each year through 2020.

- The demand for nurses far outpaces the ability of schools of nursing to respond.

- *So why can’t schools of nursing just expand student capacity even farther?*
The Other Nursing Shortage

- Nursing schools at all levels are struggling to further expand student capacity in the face of too few faculty, budget constraints, and limited clinical training and classroom space.

- Future increases in nursing student enrollment may not be possible since many schools are now operating at capacity.

- In fact, thousands of qualified nursing students are turned away each year due primarily to a short supply of nurse educators.

- Many students turned away give up on nursing and pursue alternate career options.
Qualified Applicants Turned Away from Baccalaureate & Graduate Nursing Programs: 2002-2006

Qualified Applications Turned Away

Year

2002 2003 2004 2005 2006

Qualified Applicants Turned Away from Baccalaureate & Graduate Nursing Programs: 2002-2006

SOURCE: American Association of Colleges of Nursing, Research and Data Center, 2003-2007
AACN is not responsible for reporting errors by respondent institutions.
The Competition for Nurse Faculty

- According to AACN’s latest survey, the current faculty vacancy rate is 8.8%.

- The faculty shortage is a result of many issues:
  - **Heightened competition** from the practice setting for nurses with advanced degrees
  - Significantly **lower salaries** in academia compared to the private sector
  - An **insufficient number of graduate nursing students** in the educational pipeline
  - A **rapidly aging** nurse faculty population; a large wave of retirements is expected over the next 10 years
The Federal Government’s Response

- In response to the nursing shortage, the federal government increased funding for Nursing Workforce Development programs (Title VIII, Public Health Service Act) from FY 2001-2005.

- Despite these increases, funding has been level for the past two years.

- Earlier this year, President Bush called for the elimination of the Advanced Education Nursing program which supports graduate study.

- Funding for the Nurse Faculty Loan Program has been flat since FY 2004.
## Federal Funding for Nursing Education: FY 2001 - FY 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Title VIII Funding: Nursing Ed</th>
<th>Advanced Education Nursing</th>
<th>Nurse Faculty Loan Program</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>FY 2001</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>FY 2007</strong></td>
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States Address the Nursing Shortage

- In the absence of a comprehensive federal response to the nursing shortage, individual states have been at the forefront of addressing this critical healthcare issue.
- States have been instrumental in advancing solutions and meeting local needs.
- Legislators recognize the strong connection between the faculty shortage and the production of RNs.
- Within the past two years, most efforts to address the nursing shortage have included a faculty component.
What’s Working in the States

Statewide Initiatives

- Most involve advancing new legislation and funding to address the shortage.
- Illinois, Kansas, Maryland, and Utah have all recently launched sweeping initiatives.
  - For example, the Kansas Board of Regents approved a ten-year, $30 million initiative in 2006 aimed at increasing nursing capacity in the state by 25%.
  - This program will provide funding for nursing equipment and facility upgrades; nursing faculty salaries; and scholarships.
What’s Working in the States

- Loan Forgiveness Programs
  - Programs typically provide loan repayment in return for a service commitment.
  - More than a dozen states offer these programs including GA, MN, MO, ND, NE, TX and VT.
    - In Illinois, the Nurse Educator Assistance Act which provides up to $5,000 in loan repayment and $10,000 in scholarship to graduate nursing students.
    - In Colorado, the Nursing Teacher Loan Forgiveness Program (SB 136) provides up to $20,000 in loan forgiveness in exchange for a five-year teaching commitment.
What’s Working in the States

- **Raising Faculty Salaries**
  - Established by the Mississippi Legislature, the Mississippi Office of Nursing Workforce was able to secure funding for a $6,000 salary increase for all 500 nurse faculty working in the state in July 2007.
  - Though its comprehensive Nursing Education Capacity Initiative, the Pennsylvania Higher Education Foundation together with the state hospital association funds the **Nurse Faculty Lines Program** which provides funding to schools to underwrite nursing faculty positions (up to $150,000 over three years).
Innovative Responses

Many state initiatives show great creativity in meeting local needs

- In 2006, Maryland Governor Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr. created the **Nurse Support Program Assistance Fund** which provides funding for graduate fellowships and scholarships.
  - Funding for the program is generated by the state’s Health Services Cost Review Commission which levies a 0.1% increase to the rate structure of all hospitals.
  - Approximately $8.8 million is generated annually through this mechanism.
In October 2006, Pennsylvania Governor Edward G. Rendell unveiled initiatives to increase the number of nurse educators and expand clinical education.

- The $4 million "Loaned Faculty" initiative provides funding so health care employers and nursing education providers can loan qualified teachers to nursing schools experiencing faculty shortages.

- The "Clinical Education" expansion initiative provides $3 million in grants to help nursing schools and health care providers expand clinical education opportunities for the growing number of nursing students in the state.
What’s Working in Missouri

MHA’s Graduate Nursing Faculty Financial Assistance Program

• This program provides up to $10,000 a year for full-time students and $5,000 annually for part-time students.

• Participants commit to 1-2 years of teaching for every year assistance is received.

• In July 2007, the MHA announced that 31 graduate nursing students were selected to receive funding through this program.
What’s Working in Missouri

- Kansas City Metropolitan Healthcare Council (KCMHC)
  - The KCMHC launched the **Graduate Nursing Faculty Financial Assistance Program** to provide $193,000 in funding in 2007 and 2008 to nurses from Kansas or Missouri who have completed up to 12 credit hours towards a master's degree.
  - Nurses receiving financial assistance through this program must work either full- or part-time as a clinical faculty member at a local nursing school after graduation.
What’s Working in Missouri

- **OneKC WIRED**
  
  - This unique initiative demonstrates the power of partnering among diverse stakeholders.
  
  - The focus of the healthcare component of this larger initiative is the expansion of the nursing workforce in the Kansas City region.
  
  - Collaborators include representatives from manufacturing, life sciences, health care, nursing education, and the public workforce system.
What’s Working in Missouri

- Workforce Collaborative Project
  - Clinical Faculty Academy
    - Expand the pool of educators needed to prepare the next generation of nurses
    - Increase nursing school enrollments
    - Evaluate innovative educational models that could be sustained and replicated
  - Number of participating hospitals: 54
  - Number of participating nursing programs: 27
What’s Working in Missouri

Results for 2006—2007

- 71 nurses were loaned to area schools to serve as clinical faculty
- 97 participants in 2 2-day academies
- Post-conference follow up sessions: 34 participants
- 602 additional new students enrolled
- By 2009 30 participants in the CFA will complete their MSN
Thank You

I look forward to your questions.
References


AACN State Advocacy Resources for Nursing Education
Sample legislation, loan forgiveness programs, state workforce reports, statewide nursing shortage initiatives
http://www.aacn.nche.edu/Government/StateResources.htm

AACN Issue Bulletin: State Legislative Initiatives
to Address the Nursing Shortage
http://www.aacn.nche.edu/Publications/issues/Oct06.htm

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