Academic Practice Partnership for Transformational Leadership Development and Translating Research into Practice

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Background:
- Research continues to demonstrate that a more educationally prepared nursing workforce is associated with better patient outcomes1.
- The nursing profession has been challenged to achieve higher levels of education through a system that promotes seamless academic progression2,3.
- Healthcare must reduce silos to work cooperatively across the continuum of care and return the patient/family to the center of the care processes4.
- Evidence based nursing care requires the workforce to understand and translate research findings into practice5 to improve outcomes.
- The aging of the nursing workforce and the expected retirement of a generation of nurse executives and nursing faculty has prompted more attention on leadership succession plans and creative recruitment and development of nursing faculty through academic-practice partnerships6.

Purpose:
To establish an academic practice partnership, initially to increase the proportion of nurses prepared at the bachelor's level to improve patient care outcomes. Then to expand that partnership to develop a sustainable program of professional academic development to enhance leadership capacity of interdisciplinary teams who can transform practice based on research evidence.

References:
3. Massachusetts Action Coalition-Future of Nursing: Academic Progression Brochure
6. AACN Academic Practice Partnership toolkit: http://www.aacn.nche.edu/leading-initiatives/academic-practice-partnership/toolkit

Steps in the Development of the Partnership:

Planning
- Set mutual goals
- Individualize curriculum with electives to meet needs of the facility
- Develop memorandum of understanding (MOU) involving highest leadership at both institutions
- Application process: “Call for applications”, email blasts, open house FAQs
- Space and resource allocation plan

Curriculum Offerings
- RN-BSN: 128 credits required for graduation, transfer in 80 credits and 48 credits offered on site
- MSN: 48 credit program offered entirely on site. Program is dedicated to producing the health industry’s future leaders
- MSK: 45 credit program offered entirely on site. Program is dedicated to producing nursing leaders to change nursing practice
- DNP: Innovative cohort model for all practice partners of Simmons College for online blended learning DNP in Executive Leadership

Payment model
- Global payment by hospital per course-no billing to students
- Tuition calculated by dividing global payment by the number in cohort, deducting tuition reimbursement allowance then dividing by number of pay-periods per year for amount to contract with individuals for payroll deduction
- Offsite tuition with successful workforce development grants and philanthropy

Benefits of Partnership accrue to the College, the Hospital and the Student and often simultaneously to all three:

Academic Practice Partnership

• Offset tuition with successful workforce development grants and philanthropy
• DNP: innovative cohort model for all practice partners of Simmons College for online blended learning DNP in Executive Leadership
• MSK: 45 credit program offered entirely on site. Program is dedicated to producing nursing leaders to change nursing practice
• MSN: 48 credit program offered entirely on site. Program is dedicated to producing the health industry’s future leaders
• DNP: Innovative cohort model for all practice partners of Simmons College for online blended learning DNP in Executive Leadership

Goals:
- Develop a pool of talented nursing and allied health leaders as a leadership succession strategy
- Increase proportion of BSN or higher degree nurses by 2% per year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% BSN or higher</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BSN or higher</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
<td>49.5%</td>
<td>54.0%</td>
<td>56.7%</td>
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Program Evaluation Survey Results:
Student goals for returning to school were:
- Self improvement with no specific plans to change job (46%)
- Wanted degree to keep current job (15%)
- Wanted degree to seek another position (12%)
- To gain competitive edge for future opportunities (64%)
- Job performance improved in some (36%) or most (39%) areas and 18% felt the education changed their practice completely
- Graduates overwhelmingly found the cohort model to be better than their prior on campus model:

- 12 students transitioned into the MSN onsite cohort upon graduation
- 12 became active on hospital EBP projects (4 as chairperson)
- Many presented posters nationally and regionally
- 13 promoted to leadership team
- 3 transitioned to DNP

What was the best feature of the cohort model?:

- “Projects were work-related”
- “We learned almost as much from each other as we did from our professors”
- “Not having to add commute time to my day was processless”

Exciting New Opportunities
- Summer 2016 a cohort model DNP program was begun pooling the financial resources of multiple practice partners to make an Executive Leadership DNP education affordable and accessible to address leadership succession issue in nursing

Implications
- Consult AACN Academic Practice-Partnership Toolkit for useful resources
- Having a dedicated cohort advisor and administrators at both college and hospital enhanced communication:
  - Staff need advanced notice of orientation dates, college specific event dates as well as course and assignment dates to adjust work schedules which come out months in advance especially in summer
- Hospital has technology enabled classrooms, wonderful medical library and computer labs
- However there are immense competing demands for these rooms which limits how many cohorts can run simultaneously
- Staffing issues can be challenging if multiple people from same unit are enrolled
- College could consider requesting in the MOU a commitment to a certain number of clinical placements and preceptors from the clinical partner
- Celebrate and disseminate successes: articles in each institutions newsletters and poster/presentations of EBP/Research projects open to college and hospital

Academic Practice Partnership

• Increase proportion of BSN or higher by 2% per year
• Increase proportion of MSN and DNP by __% per year
• Develop a pool of talented nursing and allied health leaders
• Develop a pool of nurse leaders as a leadership succession strategy
• Increase proportion of BSN or higher degree nurses by 2% per year

Access to Resources
• Access to Research
• Access to Experts
• Access to Space

Accreditation:
Hospital
College
Student
All

Cost Effective
Convenient
Supportive
Scale
Shared Values
Coordinated
Engaged
Diversity of Ideas
Availability of Resources
Rigorous
Safe

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