Massachusetts Department of Higher Education

Nursing Education Redesign Grant Program

Interim Project Implementation Report

Submitted by:
Berkshire Community College

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I. **Progress made toward stated goals**

One of the primary goals of this grant is to redesign Berkshire Community College’s (BCC) nursing curriculum to effectively incorporate gerontological concepts, patient quality and safety methods. To enhance safety in medication administration, the LPN program implemented a computer calculation program to assist students in the math skills in administering medications. Clinical students also practiced utilization of Situation Background Assessment Recommendation (SBAR) technique during shift-change reports.

BCC’s LPN program faculty are currently redesigning LPN-152, a theory course, to incorporate health care transitions and clinical problem solving focusing on medication, self-care, and chronic disease self-management. The curriculum will emphasize the recognition of changing client conditions. In addition, students will be able to teach clients critical observation skills to make concerning disease management. A class on interventions to prevent delirium in acute and long term care was added along with a simulation lab on diabetes self-care and self-management.

The Associate Degree program is clinically integrating Alzheimer’s care on a specialized dementia unit. The attitudes, skills and knowledge gained will also impact student care of clients in acute care and community settings. The director of this unit is a faculty resource. BCC’s Associate Degree faculty developed student behavioral objectives for this experience. Nursing faculty also purchased resources to guide nursing care for the client with Alzheimer’s disease.

To measure outcomes, pre-and post-project surveys were developed and distributed to measure faculty level of confidence in teaching gerontological nursing. The responses to the pre-implementation survey will be analyzed in the coming months and results will be provided in the final report to the Department of Higher Education.

A college Gerontological Resource website is under development and will eventually be available for all nursing faculty at BCC. The site will include links to: The Resource Guide of Current Projects; Initiatives & Resources for Improving Care Transitions Nursing developed by The Western Massachusetts Collaborative; Advancing Care Excellence for Seniors; the Hartford Institute for Geriatric Nursing and Alzheimer’s Foundation of America.
The goal of developing faculty expertise in gerontological quality and safety education at BCC is being achieved through professional development workshops. One workshop occurred October, 2011 with Beth Fiscella, CNS, RN presenting “Faculty Institute for Gerontological Nursing: Strengthening Partnerships for Clinical Education in Long term Care.” In addition, Mary Kay Kasuba RN, MS presented tools and resources from the Quality and Safety Education for Nurses Education Consortium Institute (QSEN). BCC faculty then developed strategies to infuse gerontology into nursing curriculums. In the coming months, BCC’s nursing faculty will determine a Nurse of the Future Competency to incorporate into its RN and LPN programs.

A “Transition into Practice” course for LPN graduates and incumbent nurses will be offered to share learning opportunities and to prepare LPNs for employment in the field of long-term care. This one-week (40 hour) course is being developed to provide, simulation lab experiences, internet modules, and mentoring of participants. Participation in the program enables students to apply for continuing education credits. NAPNES certification in long term care and pharmacology is also being explored for future implementation.

In order to increase student, faculty, and incumbent nurse exposure to the field of long-term healthcare and to promote shared learning opportunities among clinical partners, college-wide forums are being developed to enhance safety and effectiveness of client health care transitions. In addition, four Berkshire Health Systems (BHS) acute care forums are scheduled during winter of 2012. The BHS Nursing Education Department has planned an emphasis on managing chronic conditions along with safety, prevention of complications, and safe discharge planning.

Fairview Commons, a long term care facility will endorse clinical internships for LPN graduates as well as provide a clinical practice site for current students. Kimball Farms dementia unit is available for students’ clinical practice under faculty and nursing staff supervision. The director of this unit has been available as a faculty resource.

2. **Update on coordination of activities per proposed timeline**

Two BCC nursing faculty members participated in the Nursing Institutes as of August 30, 2011. One professional development workshop for faculty based on the train-the-trainer model of the Nursing Institutes was held in October, 2011. Another is to be scheduled for the spring 2012.
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Measurement of faculty confidence in applying geriatric concepts will be measured through pre and post surveys. The pre-survey was administered and the results will be compiled and analyzed during the spring semester. Curriculum redesign is ongoing as faculty plan spring 2012 courses, clinical experiences and behavioral outcomes.

3. **Changes in scope/impact of the project**

   There are three minor adjustments to project activities:

   - The transition course was changed from 6 months to one week with concentrated classroom, internet modules, simulations and clinical mentorship. This change was based on ease of scheduling and attendance for BHS clinical nursing staff.
   - The second faculty development workshop required re-scheduling to the spring 2012 semester due to faculty involvement in end of fall semester activities.
   - To promote shared learning opportunities it was determined to be more feasible to provide four forums during winter 2012 and invite clinical partners, rather than providing monthly acute care forums as part of the transition course.

4. **Status of relationship/support with practice partners**

   BCC’s project partners, Berkshire Health Care Systems, Berkshire Medical Center, Fairview Commons (nursing rehab), and Kimball Farms (a long term-care facility) have all been active in project activities.

5. **Budget issues**

   There are no budget issues to report. BCC will expend grant funds as originally anticipated.

6. **Unexpected/major issues or potential barriers to success**

   There are no unexpected/major issues or potential barrier to the success of this project moving forward.