



HYPODERMIC

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North Carolina Association of Nursing Students

Inside this issue:

Building Common Ground: A summary on the Forums on Reforming North Carolina Health Care	2
Recruiting Through Technology	2
Notes From Asheville	3
Staffing Issues	3
District IV Events	4
Characteristics of a Leader in the Nursing Profession	5

Changes for the Better

Hello,

I am most excited about serving as your Hypodermic Editor for the 2007-2008 term! I am looking forward to hearing the voices from across our state projected through the printed text and images in the Hypodermic E-Zine. I truly believe that the dissemination of written words serves as a powerful mechanism to share dreams, opinions, information, knowledge, ideas, laughter, passion, and more. They are pieces to a magnificent puzzle that fits us together...shows us the full picture. In the future, I challenge each of you to express your self and share with your colleagues through contributions to our newsletter.



This issue consists of contributions that call for changes to be made for the betterment of things that matter to us. The need for health care organizations to change the way they seek to recruit and retain nurses is examined and tips are offered. As we know, the current United States Presidential campaign is bringing health care reform to the forefront in our nation. Health care reform measures are addressed in this issue's cover story. Staffing ratios are known to have a correlation to patient outcomes. Your attention will be directed to a legislative bill that will combat the low levels of nurse staffing that endangers patients...and I dare say nurses themselves. As a student, I know I often times wonder what can I change to make myself a better student...and future nursing professional. Well, in the pages that follow three traits are described; if these traits are embodied by you and I then we will be apt for greater success!

I enjoyed reading the articles for this E-Zine. I do hope that you will enjoy them as well. I hope that reading these articles will inspire you to think about things that will affect you and your practice as a nursing professional.

I wish you well in your pursuit for necessary change and excellence.

Best wishes,

Shalia S. Gregory

Shalia S. Gregory

Hypodermic Editor 2007-2008

Building Common Ground: A Summary of the Forums on Reforming North Carolina Health Care

By: Gail Pruett, MSN, RN, NCNA

During November, healthcare providers and consumers gave up a Saturday to talk about the need for healthcare reform in North Carolina. Three forums, November 3rd in Greensboro; November 10th in Asheville; and November 17th in Raleigh, were hosted by the Healthcare for All in NC (HCFaNC); the NC Pediatric Society; the NC Community health Center Association and, the NC Nurses Association. There has been a strong collaborative effort among these groups to disseminate information about the need for healthcare reform and, to obtain opinions and ideas from the provider and citizen communities throughout the past year.

At this point, only the health insurance industry is well funded and focused on influencing the outcome. The forums were designed to allow other stakeholders to identify commonalities and develop a set of principles the general Assembly should go by in developing a North Carolina health care model. Many legislators are supportive of health care for all.

There are two important bills before the NC legislature. H901 "Health Care for All" commits the state to provide health care for all North Carolinians. H187 "Health Care for All Planning Commission" brings the stakeholders in health care together. Both call for action on this important issue; not another study.

Continued on Page 5

Recruiting Through Technology: How to Gain an Edge on Recruiting Nursing Next Generation

By Brad Sherrod RN, MSN

Health care organizations need to focus on new and innovative strategies to recruit and retain new generations entering today's nursing workforce. Health care organizations must seek ways of replacing the retiring nursing workforce. The

Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) projects by the year 2020 there will be 1.8 million licensed nurses in the workforce, but there will be a projected need of 2.8 million. In 2004, a HRSA study found that the average age of nurses was 46.8.

Nurse recruiters have to start specifically targeting generation X & Y candidates so they can gain a recruiting advantage on their competitors. How do hospitals develop new recruitment avenues to bring potential generation X & Y candidates to their HR offices? Look to the generations that you are targeting, paying attention to their evolution. Generation X & Y have grown up during the technology boom. Most of generation X and practically all of generation Y grew up with access to computers and the Internet. These individuals feel very comfortable with high-tech mobile devices and software. Health care organizations can look to world trends in moving from traditional print marketing to the Internet.

HR departments have to partner with marketing in order to become better at marketing nursing positions. To gain an advantage HR departments must be willing to be creative and effectively develop strategies to recruit strong qualified candidates. A suggested direction is to jump onboard with the Internet video crazy with sites like myspace.com and youtube.com. This is the medium that generation X & Y are reviewing on a constant basis. The evolution of marketing mainstream products has moved towards this medium, thus making it a new frontier that health care recruiters could tap into easily and very inexpensively to gain a competitive advantage.

**How do hospitals
develop new
recruitment avenues
to bring potential
generation X & Y
candidates to their
HR offices?**

Continued on Page 6

Putting the Pieces Together: Notes from the Mid-Year NCANS Convention in Asheville

By Kati Bloedau, NCANS BTN Director

From the clinical journal of K.B., 33yo BTN Dir.:

Obtained retractable badge holder with NCANS logo to wear with pride at clinical. Delicious lunch, gorgeous view from hotel, cozy fireplace, coffee and chocolate available PRN.

Pharm review v. effective: learned side effects of Cef the Giant, that the Pril Sisters okay to give in cases of CHF, not compatible with renal dz. Learned cranial nerves once and for all. Reviewed history of military nursing, discovered that the Army Nurse Corps can set up a 300 bed hospital in hours. Discussed nephrology and dialysis, obtained three squeezable kidneys. Took 85 pictures of scholarship winner at lunch, passed out 19 raffle prizes. Keynote address and stimulating discussion afterward re: logistics of transition to universal health care. Intubated mannequin in Exhibit Hall with assistance from CNRA student. Research topic: Find out if CRNAs do some sort of special forearm exercises.

Thanks so much to all the students, presenters, exhibitors and volunteers who worked hard to make our Asheville conference such a success. And just think, this was only the mid-year event - it will twice as great in Durham in October!

If you would like to share your favorite parts of the mid-year conference, or if you have suggestions or requests to make for the annual conference at the Durham Marriott October 2nd through October 5th, please email any member of the board. We especially welcome your suggestions for future focus session topics.



Photo: CRNA displaying intubation skills for nursing student to perform a return demonstration.

Nursing Issue: Registered Nurse Safe Staffing Act of 2007

By Melanie Barr, NCANS District II Director

An important issue facing the nursing profession today is low nurse staffing levels and the safety implications thereof. Nurse-staffing ratios are calculated by hours of skilled nursing care and the number of patients per nurse. There is a direct correlation between staff ratios and patient morbidity and mortality. An increased number of nurses per number of patients is related to decreased patient morbidity and mortality. Several states have mandated safe nurse staffing ratios for the benefit of both nurse and patient. In January of 2007, Senator Inouye of Hawaii introduced a bill to Congress entitled "Registered Nurse Safe Staffing Act of 2007."

If enacted, it would be an amendment to the Social Security Act to provide patient safety by establishing mandated minimum nurse staff ratios. Under this Act, direct care nurses and specialty nurse organizations would determine safe-staffing ratios. Nurses would not be assigned to work on a unit unless they had an established competency for professional care.

The Registered Nurse Safe Staffing Act seems like it would solve a lot of problems. It is great that they are looking towards the direct care nurses to assist in establishing these staffing guidelines. This is definitely legislation that can affect the future of nursing practice. However, it does not address the actual source of the nursing shortage. If you have any thoughts about this bill that you would like to share with your Congressional representatives please send them a letter! You can use the following link to send your letter: http://rnaction.org/campaign/Write_To_Your_MOC.



Weve on the Web!

Visit us at www.ncans.org

The purpose of NCANS is:

- To assume responsibility for contributing to nursing education in order to provide for the highest quality health care,
- To provide programs representative of the fundamental and current professional interest and concerns,
- To aid in the development of the whole person, their professional role, and their responsibility for the health care of people in all walks of life, and
- To represent nursing to the consumer, institutions and other organizations.

Upcoming District IV Events

Viquet 2008 Food Literacy Class **Tuesdays, February 19th - June 3rd**

People interested in learning more about healthy eating and physical activity take this course at no charge in return for giving back 20 hours of community service in food and nutrition education. For more information or to register contact Mallory Rimmer at 744-1358 or at rimmerm@ecu.edu.

ECU Relay for Life

April 4-5, 2008

Bunting Field, ECU Campus

Contact: Nicole Betschman at ecurelay@ecu.edu

16th Annual Research Day

April 3rd - 4th, 2008

“FUTURE INNOVATIONS IN NURSING AND HEALTHCARE: GENOMICS AND BEYOND”

Sigma Theta Tau International, Nu Omega Chapter
UNC Wilmington, School of Nursing

Walk to Cure Diabetes

March 15, 2008.

Greenville Convention Center in Greenville, NC @
the Greenville Convention Center on Registration


Start Time: 9:00 AM Walk Start Time: 10:30am. For

more information go to www.jdrf.org

Please inform us of events that will be occurring in your district or school by contacting your NCANS District Director or Hypodermic Editor!

Characteristics of a Leader in the Nursing Profession

By Cathy Gurganious
(NCANS Scholarship Winner)



As I sat at my desk listening to the instructor, while frantically flipping through the pages of my notes to find some abstract concept I knew I had read somewhere the night before, I wondered if I would ever be able to become a good nurse. I tried to imagine the confidence I would exhibit walking into a patient's room and knowing exactly what to do, as I had seen my instructors do many times. I tried to sense the compassion I would show, not only to my patients and their family members, but also to my co-workers and staff. I contemplated being confronted with ethical issues and wondered if I would be able to retain my integrity as we were taught in the first unit of nursing class. To me, being a nurse means being a leader. Three traits, confidence, compassion and integrity are the characteristics of leadership in the nursing profession that I admire the most and aspire to integrate into practice.

To have confidence is to believe in your own abilities. You must trust yourself to make the right decision at the right time and for the right reason. Trusting in yourself allows others to feel secure in your abilities as well. Confidence requires knowledge, wisdom, maturity and faith. By dedicated study, careful observation, and the desire to absorb as much information as I can, I hope to be able to gain the confidence I need to become a good leader. After a particularly frustrating clinical rotation during my first semester, one of my instructors told me, "It will come. Give it time. You are just beginning to grasp the concepts of the nursing process but after awhile, it will come naturally." I realized then that confidence is not instant; it is developed over time with dedication and patience. Therefore, there will come a day when I will walk confidently into a patient's room and know exactly what to do.

I believe compassion is a gift we have inside of us, but it must be allowed to surface. As nurses, we must put aside our prejudices and not to allow ourselves to become cynical and calloused by the issues we face today. A nurse, as a leader, must be able to recognize a need and be motivated to advocate in an effort to provide holistic care. A nurse must also be concerned for the dignity and respect of all human life. As a student, I have found myself expressing compassion towards my classmates by providing encouragement and counseling to those who feel like quitting or are fearful of failure.

Continued on Page 9

Building Common Ground...continued from Page 2

We could see movement on these bills in the 2008 short session of the general Assembly; so the need for a unified consumer and provider voice is urgent.

In total, there were almost 70 participants. Most were providers; with consumer advocates being well represented. Public health had a presence. AS Bill Brooks, Director of Communication for HCFaNC and coordinator for the forums reported, the process was "messy and energizing!" At each forum the participants were given a set of principles to discuss and to suggest revisions. The sustained engagement and passion throughout the three hours on each Saturday was impressive! These principles, once finalized, will be sent to the legislative team re-writing H1897 as a basis for healthcare planning in NC.

The following principles are those that were discussed. It is important to note that they are in the process of being re-worked; based on various perspective and concerns that were generated. Look for another draft of principles soon. Nurses, other providers and consumers will have an opportunity to respond to these revisions in early January through an online survey. Here are the current principles:

1. The most directly involved in health care, providers and consumers, should provide oversight of North Carolina's health care system.
2. Decisions on care will be made by provider and consumer.
3. Everyone should have access to comprehensive care, beginning with primary care and including dental and mental health.
4. The value of early intervention and wellness should be recognized and rewarded.
5. Medical care should be based on evidence of safety and effectiveness.
6. The appropriate outcomes for evaluation are the improved health of the individual and the community.
7. To the extent possible all participants should contribute support in the most efficient method feasible. Financing should not be a barrier to early intervention.

In addition to these statements; some others were generated through table discussions. These ideas are being considered as additional principles by the steering committee and may be included in the survey. The three most frequently proposed were:

1. Individuals have a responsibility to accessing and participating in health care.
2. Systems should encourage innovation.
3. The greatest impediment is the high fragmentation of our system.

Questions about a future model that were asked were, "Who will be covered?" What is the extent of coverage; in the number of people, the group of people, and the type of services provided?" "How will compliance of individuals be monitored? Of providers? Of payers?" "What resources, in terms of money, providers and supplies will be available?" How will the health insurance industry fit into the plan? What do they say about this initiative now?" "Consumer literacy, and taking responsibility for one's health, will be important. How do we educate consumers about appropriate decisions in preventative, acute and long term health?" "How do we prevent fraud and abuse of the system?" "Is there a political will of the people and of the political candidates and incumbents to make this change happen?"

These and other questions will be considered as the principles are revised. And, more importantly, they will be forwarded to members of the legislature for consideration; when the timing is right.

For we as nurses, what are the next steps?

Participate in the online survey in early January 2008: www.ncnurses.org.

Participate in future town hall meetings in the winter of 1008 to discuss how this initiative can be spread throughout the state.

Agree to present information to colleagues, friends and acquaintances so that a strong grass roots support is developed.

Develop relationships with your legislators to discuss the need for healthcare reform; based on the consensus of principles.

Nurses are in a key position to influence the direction and foundation of healthcare reform. We can do it now, at the beginning, rather than waiting to react when it is too late. We know what our patients and colleagues need! Let our knowledge and expertise serve as a basis for what needs to be done!

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Recruiting Through Technology...continued from Page 2

Organizations spend thousands of dollars recruiting nurses to organizations so their needs to be some strategic methods and practices in place to keep new hires engaged and help them with enculturation into the organization. Organizations must always remember to value their employees and re-recruit them every day. Some key strategies for retaining nurses are:

- Support new hires from day one
- Help them develop relationships in their department
- Coach and mentor new hires
- Build healthy supportive work environments
- Manager training to teach them how to retain employees
- Healthy living programs
- One gets loyalty by first giving it
- Inclusive decision making
- Consistently meet with employees for feedback
- Spotlight star performers with recognition
- Help employees with career advancement opportunities



As the nursing shortage increases the pool of nursing candidates will become ever increasingly low. Organizations must start to strategically plan for ways to be creative in their HR efforts to attract and retain the newer generations of nursing candidates.

References:

Health Resources and Services Administration website: <http://bhpr.hrsa.gov/nursing/default.htm>

Siela, Debra (2006). Managing the multigenerational nursing staff. *American Nurse Today*. pg 47-49.

Exhibitors at NCANS Mid-Year Convention Recruiting Convention-Goers



Three Traits of Successful Nursing Students

Bonnie K. Hill, NCANS Legislative Director



1. Time Management - All of the best students in my class have this skill, I have had to learn it or be left behind. Have you ever noticed how many of the people with large families seem to excel? I'm thinking how can they do all the reading and everything I do, and still be Mom too? They've learned that when they sit down to read, to read. They don't check their email, or flip through the chapters to see how many pages are left, or go get a refill and another bag of popcorn; they finish what they've started.

2. Prioritizing - Make a list; decide what to do first; what's harder, what's more fun, which you can't finish at 3am when your brain's useless. Know your deadlines and what percentage of your grade is applied to an assignment. Then rewrite your list with the most important items first. Also, keep in mind that a little shopping for Mom's birthday might be okay to put before reading if you've just finished your nursing issues paper!

3. Know Thyself - Know how you study, your learning style, and what your weaknesses are. If you procrastinate, recognize that and start on it the day it's assigned. That is at least fifteen more minutes of sleep you'll get the night before it's due. If you are a hands-on learner, go to the lab after you read the book. If you miss test questions because you change answers or read them incorrectly, SLOW DOWN. Circle words like "except" "always" and "never." We know by now that a never will ALMOST never be the answer! Know what your habits are and proactively change the ones that don't help you out.

If you can master these three skills, you'll become a much better student. Come to think of it, they might help you become a better professional too!

North Carolina Association of Nursing Students

Board Of Directors 2007 – 2008



Characteristics of a Leader...continued from Page 5

With my clinical patients, I am concerned, not only for their immediate health, but for what their future holds for them and their families. As a nurse, one must realize that compassion should not be limited to the sick and needy. Everyone deserves understanding and kindness. I hope to never lose the gift of compassion when I become a nurse, as it reminds me of why I chose this profession in the first place.

To have integrity is to have the respect of not only the people around you, but respect of yourself. If you lack respect for yourself then you cannot lead others wisely. As nurses, we are to live by a code of ethics higher than most standards.

In choosing to become a nurse, I made the decision to abide by this code. If I compromise my values, I have let myself down and marred the nursing profession. My ambition is to gain integrity as a student and carry it into my nursing career by being honest and truthful, making decisions that will benefit the patient, and abiding by the scope of practice of the nursing discipline.

To be honest, I never pictured myself as a leader until I started studying nursing. Nursing has given me the ability to expand not only my skills, but my character as well. Therefore, to answer the question I asked myself earlier, yes, I will become a good nurse one day, thanks to a few instructors who have enough faith in me to challenge me at every turn. The examples of leadership, set by these instructors, have encouraged me to study harder and set my goals high. The impact their guidance has had on me has made me determined that I will, one day, make a difference as a nurse who demonstrates wise leadership abilities using the confidence, compassion and integrity I gained during my time as a nursing student.

Congratulations Cathy,

We believe that you will continue to develop as a nursing leader through the characteristics of compassion, confidence, and integrity. We thank you so much for contributing your thoughts to our knowledge of what nursing leadership embodies. Most importantly, we wish you great success in your future nursing career.

Sincerely,

NCANS Board of Directors 2007 – 2008