

The Western Massachusetts

Nursing Collaborative

Advancing Nursing  *Addressing Critical Needs*

WESTERN
MASSACHUSETTS
NURSING
COLLABORATIVE

STRATEGIC PLAN 2016-2019

The Western MA Nursing Collaborative is an initiative of the Healthcare Workforce Partnership of Western MA. The mission of the partnership is to ensure that quality, culturally competent health care, provided by a well-trained workforce, is available to serve the population in Western Massachusetts.

A Program of the Regional Employment Board of Hampden County, Inc.

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The *Western Massachusetts Nursing Collaborative (WMNC)* is a coalition of nurse leaders from academia and healthcare service organizations focused on the critical role the nursing workforce plays in the delivery of quality of care. Established in 2006, the WMNC is working to ensure Western MA has an adequate supply of high quality, diverse nurses to meet the healthcare needs in our region.

Strategic Goals & Objectives 2016-2019

1. Increase the diversity of the nursing workforce

- Objective A: Increase employment of nurses of diverse backgrounds
- Objective B: Prepare student of diverse backgrounds for the rigors of nursing programs

2. Ensure nurses have the competencies and full scope of practice to meet the health needs of the community

- Objective A: Increase hiring in high demand settings
- Objective B: Provide nurses with competencies to lead and improve patient-centered care transitions
- Objective C: Integrate high priority competencies into educational programs

3. Increase the number of nurses with advanced degrees

- Objective A: Promote accelerated educational pathways
- Objective B: Support nurses in NP programs
- Objective C: Increase knowledge of financing options

4. Increase nursing faculty in Western MA

- Objective A: Motivate nurses to explore faculty roles
- Objective B: Utilize innovative compensation strategies
- Objective C: Increase recruitment and retention

5. Increase retention in all healthcare settings

- Objective A: Utilize evidence-based retention programs
- Objective B: Increase access to professional advancement opportunities

6. Sustain the partnership

- Objective A: Include more cross-continuum partners
- Objective B: Leverage partner co-investment and funding
- Objective C: Align with national and state-wide nursing organizations

Academic Partners

- American International College
- Bay Path University
- Elms College
- Greenfield Community College
- Holyoke Community College
- Springfield Technical Community College
- University of Massachusetts, Amherst
- Westfield State University

Service Partners

- Baystate Health
- Caring Health Center
- Cooley Dickinson Hospital
- Commonwealth Care Alliance
- Genesis Health/Heritage Hall
- Holyoke Medical Center
- Porchlight VNA/Home Care - Chicopee
- Shriners Hospitals for Children - Springfield
- Sisters of Providence Health Systems

Local Chapter Associations

- Western MA Chapter of the National Association of Hispanic Nurses
- Western Massachusetts National Black Nurses Association

Trade Associations

- Massachusetts Senior Care Association

Workforce Development

- DHE- Allied Health Initiative
- Massachusetts Action Coalition
- Regional Employment Board of Hampden County, Inc.

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Strategic Plan

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Western MA Nursing Collaborative Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives
2016 - 2019

GOAL 1: Increase the diversity of the nursing workforce in western MA

The nursing workforce needs to reflect the diverse communities in Hampden, Franklin and Hampshire counties. Increasing the ethnic and racial ratio of nurses to match the community population may require a redesign of training and educational programs that provides additional supports for diverse groups, such as tutoring, mentorship and employer resource groups. Additionally, educational institutions should evaluate their current admissions and enrollment processes to address the unique needs of diverse individuals. The implementation of researched-based strategies to increase the diversity of the nursing workforce will ultimately lead to a culturally competent delivery of care for consumers and a healthier community.

Objective A:

Increase graduation, licensure and employment of diverse nurses in the region

Strategies:

1. Aggregate diversity activities and initiatives that are employed by academic partners. Develop a subgroup to identify and share best practices
2. Identify and involve minority nursing groups in the planning and implementing of initiatives
3. Investigate the usefulness of the Department of Higher Education (DHE) Centralized Clinical Placement (CCP) management system to capture diversity data for students and faculty through the CCP orientation process
4. Evaluate the effectiveness of the CCP management system in meeting the strategic plan goals of the WMNC

Objective B:

Facilitate high school career programs to increase the number of diverse students prepared to select a career in nursing

Strategies:

1. Identify consistent diversity metrics that can be easily collected
2. Increase collaboration and communication with the Healthcare Workforce Partnership's Allied Health Committee

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3. Target diverse groups in the dissemination of resources and materials on nursing career opportunities; include high school teachers and career counselors when disseminating resources
4. Plan job and career fairs targeted to diverse students
5. Share best practices of existing health science career pathway programs, e.g. Holyoke Community College and Chicopee Comprehensive High School – Pathways to Prosperity program

GOAL 2: Ensure the nursing workforce has the competencies and full scope of practice to meet the changing health needs of our community

Hiring trends for nurses is rapidly increasing in long-term care, sub-acute care and home care agencies as a result of the growing elderly population. These settings require specialized trainings and require nurses to lead their care teams. Therefore, nurses in Western MA must seek continued professional development and gain new competencies to address the changing health needs of the community. Nursing programs need to redesign the curricula to prepare new nurses for careers in these care settings, and nursing faculty must be prepared to educate students in the new curricula. The recruitment of new partners representing long-term, sub-acute and home care is needed to lead in the revision of the nursing curriculum and provide early exposure to new nurses by means clinical placements for students.

Objective A:

Increase the hiring of nurses in high demand positions such as long-term care, home health care, skilled nursing facilities, mental health, behavioral health, operating rooms, intensive care units, and ambulatory care units

Strategies:

1. Collate and analyze vacancy data from service providers with high vacancy trends
2. Develop a communication plan to educate faculty and students on industry hiring trends
3. Recommend the redesign of employment applications to give new nurses the opportunity to apply for work while preparing for the NCLEX exam
4. Consider innovative opportunities for clinical exposure in high demand areas
5. Explore new methods to support nurses precepting students

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Objective B:

Ensure new and incumbent nurses have the competencies to lead and improve patient-centered care transitions

Strategies:

1. Reconvene faculty and nurse educators in service settings in collaboration with MA Senior Care Foundation (MSCF) to discuss Care Transitions Education Project (CTEP) integration strategies
2. Re-introduce CTEP to Western MA partner organizations
3. Examine the best approach to highlight geriatric competencies in nursing curricula

Objective C:

Integrate high priority competencies into academic and service educational programs

Strategies:

1. Promote standardized geriatric competencies throughout academic and service educational programs
2. Promote, integrate and build on regional Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) funded geriatric projects
3. Create more student nurse employment and clinical opportunities in geriatric settings
4. Explore expanding MA Senior Care Foundation's Faculty Institute for Gerontological Nursing (FIGN) to service-based educators
5. Promote the MA Action Coalition's Massachusetts Nurse of the Future Nursing Core Competencies[®] (NOFNCC) toolkit to academic institutions and service providers
6. Collaborate with Pioneer Valley Inter-Professional Education Collaborative (PV-IPEC) to develop inter-professional education forums for academic institutions and service providers
7. Develop and share common simulation lab experiences in academic and service settings
8. Collaborate with Baystate Health's Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program to complete a gap analysis of its existing curriculum for registered nursing students and APRN students in geriatric and palliative care

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GOAL 3: Increase the number of nurses in the region with a BSN/BS in nursing or advanced degree

Expanded advanced degree nursing programs with increasing student enrollments is a necessary prerequisite to increase the number of registered nurses with advanced degrees to 80% by 2020 in Western MA. As educational programs expand, it is necessary to recruit and engage more service providers to increase clinical sites and the number of preceptors available to train students. In addition to providing clinical placements to students, service providers must also support their incumbent nurses by making information on advanced degrees more accessible, providing incentives such as tuition reimbursement programs, and developing and promoting career ladders.

Objective A:

Promote accelerated pathways to advanced education at all levels for new and incumbent nurses, from LPN to PhD

Strategies:

1. Continue hosting the annual WMNC Nursing Open House and develop a communication plan to reach a wider audience to target nursing students, working nurses and minority groups
2. Document educational pathways on the Partnership's website
3. Conduct an assessment to identify barriers preventing working nurses from returning to school
4. Identify recommendations to minimize barriers preventing working nurses from returning to school

Objective B:

Recruit and support incumbent nurses to enroll in and complete nurse practitioner (NP) programs

Strategies:

1. Quantify and document the regional need for NPs, share this information with schools and new graduates and post on the Healthcare Workforce Partnership of Western MA's website
2. Develop clinical placements and employment opportunities for new NPs
3. Utilize the MA DHE Centralized Clinical Placement management system to support other occupations

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Objective C:

Increase the knowledge of financial support options for academic progression

Strategies:

1. Develop a list of resources and planning tools for financing nursing education
2. Gather resources on funding opportunities and planning tools for nurses advancing their education. Survey academic and service providers to identify scholarships and incentives offered to students and employees
3. Identify funding sources and planning tools for employees and students and share resources with attendees at the annual WMNC Nursing Open House. Include links from website to the academic institutions

GOAL 4: Increase the supply and diversity of nursing faculty in Western MA

The Nursing Faculty Database (NFD) managed by the MA Department of Higher Education provides a platform for registered nurses to create and publish their professional profiles and serves as a faculty bank for nursing programs. The purpose of the NFD is to match nursing programs with clinical faculty. The WMNC is committed to promoting the NFD within service organizations in an effort to increase the nursing faculty pool in the region. The WMNC recognizes and supports the need to create a welcoming and exciting environment combined with adequate compensation to attract new and highly qualified faculty, while leveraging and expanding current nurse faculty trainings.

Objective A:

Recruit, motivate, and entice diverse nurses to explore the faculty role

Strategies:

1. Determine faculty diversity goals as aligned with the demographics of Western MA
2. Identify diverse individuals in service settings who have shown excellence in precepting and or education, and invest in these individuals through professional development trainings and joint appointments

Objective B:

Identify and utilize innovative funding and employment strategies to support and increase faculty roles

Strategies:

1. Increase funding sources to support faculty roles
2. Establish joint-appointments between all service settings and schools
3. Develop Dedicated Education Units (DEUs) between nursing programs and service providers

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Objective C:

Increase recruitment and retention of clinical faculty

Strategies:

1. Evaluate the usefulness of and promote the MA Department of Higher Education Centralized Clinical Placement Nursing Faculty Database
2. Develop a standardized method of measuring clinical faculty retention
3. Offer and promote professional development for adjunct faculty

GOAL 5: Increase the retention of new nurses in all healthcare settings

The WMNC recognizes central to the new nurse's experience in a clinical practice setting is the nature of the interaction, coaching and mentorship received from his or her preceptor. Recognizing the preceptor's role as both vital to the organization but cumbersome for the individual, the WMNC identifies selective strategies to promote job satisfaction for preceptors, students and new employees. In addition, the WMNC is committed to maintaining and expanding new nurse residency programs in service settings.

Objective A:

Expand the use of evidence-based retention programs and strategies such as On-the-Job-Training, nurse residency, career coaching and preceptorship programs across all care settings

Strategies:

1. Define preceptor competencies
2. Define preceptor evaluation criteria and develop a process for regular evaluation
3. Conduct needs assessment in post-acute and home care settings with preceptors to identify and promote recruitment
4. Identify training and education needs to improve effectiveness
5. Promote existing preceptor training programs and consider possible expansion opportunities
6. Recognize and support existing preceptors in their role as mentors and coaches of new nurses

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Objective B:

Increase new nurse access to professional advancement opportunities and career planning support and guidance

Strategies:

1. Assess existing service providers practices to support professional advancement
2. Demonstrate the preceptor's role in new nurse retention
3. Develop strategies to support, augment and increase the frequency of preceptor trainings across the region, especially in long-term care and home care settings
4. Promote specialty certificates as a professional advancement opportunity for incumbent nurses
5. Equip nurse leaders, managers and preceptors with the competencies to guide nurses' professional development plans

GOAL 6: Sustain the growth and development of the Healthcare Workforce Partnership to implement its goals

Implementing the strategic plan goals of the Western MA Nursing Collaborative requires the full participation of its members. The WMNC must expand its membership to include more partners in all care settings and trade and chapter associations. Service providers and educational institutions must continue to invest staff time and resources but also contribute annually to the Regional Employment Board of Hampden County, Inc. (REB) to support staff, operations, meetings, networking events, the website and regional membership to the Department of Higher Education's Centralized Nursing Clinical Placement System. The Healthcare Workforce Partnership and the REB must also continue to secure public and private funds to support projects that directly benefit its partners and the current and future healthcare workforce.

Objective A:

Expand the Healthcare Workforce Partnership to include more all service settings and associations

Strategies:

1. Identify and recruit additional partnership members
2. Recruit members representing trade and chapter organizations
3. Create an outreach strategy and onboarding process for new members

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Objective B:

Leverage partner co-investment funding in nursing from the public and private sector

Strategies:

1. Increase leveraged investment and funding from public and private sources
2. Identify and obtain new public and private sector funding aligned with the WMNC mission

Objective C:

Align with recognized national and state-wide nursing organizations

Strategies:

1. Increase coordination and alignment of initiatives and resources
2. Implement promising practices and innovative approaches nursing education and continued professional development

For more information on the Western MA Nursing Collaborative, visit:
<http://westernmasshealthcareers.org/about/nursing-collaborative>

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Glossary of Terms:

Behavioral Health Facility: a healthcare agency which addresses a consumer's patterns of behavior and the impact that these behaviors have on the mind and body; can include issues of substance abuse.

Career Ladder: a defined sequence or sequences of upward progression for employees within an organization.

Career Pathways Program: the Healthcare Workforce Partnership of Western MA Grades 9-14 Career Pathways Initiative brings together high schools and community colleges to create career pathways that better align health education, training, and employment opportunities for young people.

Centralized Clinical Placements (CCP): developed by the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education (DHE) as a stand-alone web-based software tool designed to facilitate the display, scheduling, and management of clinical nursing education placements between health care organizations and nursing education programs.

Clinical Placements: an experiential education requirement for nursing students in health care settings.

Cultural Competence: cultural and linguistic competence is a way of acting and thinking (both as an individual and as a company) that allows one to work effectively with people of different cultures.

Healthcare Workforce Partnership of Western MA: a collaboration among employers, workforce development leaders, training and education providers, community-based organizations, and philanthropic organizations. The Partnership responds to the workforce needs of employers and ensures that workers have access to the education and training needed to prepare them for lifelong careers in the rapidly changing healthcare industry.

Home Health Care: home health care is provided to consumers in need of medical, nursing, social, or therapeutic treatment, as well as assistance with the essential activities of daily living.

Long-Term Care: long-term care is a range of services and support for personal care needs. Long-term care is primarily concerned with maintaining or improving the ability of consumers to function as independently as possible for as long as possible in a residential setting.

MA Senior Care Foundation's Faculty Institute for Gerontological Nursing (FIGN): a collaboration between MSCF and UMASS Lowell is a professional development program

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for nursing faculty, it provides an avenue to increase learning and to enrich the teaching of gerontological nursing in educational institutions.

Patient-Centered Care Transitions: patient-centered care keeps the patient's needs and concerns at the center of planning and delivery of care. Care transitions refers to the transfer of a patient from one care setting or set of providers to another during the course of an episode of care.

Pioneer Valley Inter-Professional Education Collaborative (PV-IPEC): a collaborative of the Pioneer Valley colleges and universities which support efforts for students and staff studying and practicing different disciplines opportunities to learn and work together.

Regional Employment Board of Hampden County, Inc.: established by federal and state legislation, the REB is a business-led, non-profit corporation that engages its members from business, education, labor and community-based agencies to set public policies that will build a better workforce. The Regional Employment Board plans, coordinates and oversees the growth and effective use of public and private investment in workforce development initiatives for quality jobs.

Skilled Nursing Facilities: skilled nursing facilities provide personal, rehabilitative and preventative care for consumers who need 24-hour care. Skilled nursing facilities serve as a source of transitional care between a hospital stay and a patient's return to their home.

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