Diversity Toolkit for Recruitment & Retention of Minority Nursing Students

Taking the LEAD for Nursing in Wisconsin: Leadership, Educational Advancement & Diversity

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Introduction

Taking the LEAD for Nursing in Wisconsin: Leadership, Educational Advancement, and Diversity, a State Implementation Program (SIP) grant awarded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation®, focuses on the three critical areas its name implies. Promoting diversity in nursing is a key element in this work. The toolkit provides guidance and resources for students, faculty, and nurses looking to develop and promote diversity initiatives within schools of nursing.

Toolkit items were identified by the Diversity Collaborative, along with members of the Academic and Leadership Collaboratives, who were charged with advancing the goals of the Taking the LEAD grant project. The committee recognizes that the materials provided in this toolkit are not inclusive of all content available, but rather intended to serve as a foundational resource for useful information about the recruitment and retention of minority nursing students. Assessment of the competency criteria for each resource is based on a review of articles and information available online.

As pointed out by Lee¹ in a comprehensive review of the recruitment and retention literature, the issues of need, such as financial aid, mentoring, and tutoring, are not new. In fact, the majority of the issues discussed by Lee are still relevant to the recruitment and retention of minority students today.

Diversity resources are also listed on the Wisconsin Center for Nursing website (http://www.wisconsincencenterfornursing.org).

Overview

Diversity stands as an essential core value of the Taking the LEAD Grant. The case for increasing diversity in schools of nursing has never been stronger. Increasing diversity of the healthcare workforce, in general, and nursing, in particular, is fundamental for the adequate provision of culturally competent care to our nation’s growing minority communities. A diverse healthcare workforce will help to expand healthcare access for the underserved, foster research in neglected areas of societal need, and enrich the pool of policy makers to meet the needs of a diverse population.²,³

Significant to the recruitment of minority nursing students is the understanding that recruitment and retention strategies must be a comprehensive process with long-term, institution-wide philosophical and financial commitment to diversity.⁴,⁵,⁶,⁷ Recruitment strategies that work for traditional White female students will not always work for diverse students.¹,⁷ Recruitment and retention strategies must respond to the specific needs and barriers of each group.⁴,⁷ To that end, the resources in the Diversity Toolkit are organized around five key issues:

- Building the Nursing Pipeline: Recruitment Strategies
- Recruitment from Non-Traditional Sources
- Retention and Integration Strategies: Academic/Socioeconomic Support
- Predicting Success of Ethnic Minorities on Nursing Licensure Exams
- Career Transition Issues and Strategies

In the toolkit, “minority students and professionals,” “minorities,” and “people of diverse race and ethnicity” all refer to the following minorities, racial, and ethnic groups: African American or people of African descent; Asian Americans Pacific Islander, or people of Asian descent; Hispanic American, Latino, or Latina people; Native Americans; Alaskan Natives; and men.

Eight publications provided the background for the development of this toolkit:


In using the toolkit, subject matter, topics, and issues are introduced by an explanatory paragraph, followed by references. The references provide further evidence on how to address and understand the identified approaches.
BUILDING THE NURSING PIPELINE: RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

To increase nursing diversity, the onus is placed on those within nursing and nursing education to develop methods to better attract members of minority populations. Recruitment plays a vital role in increasing the number of diverse nursing students. Strategies for recruitment of minorities include developing an educational pipeline, increasing ethnic presence in media, and breaking down the negative image of nursing, in general, and men, in particular.

ARTICLES


**CERTIFICATIONS**

Certified Diversity Recruiter 9.0  
[https://www.airsdirectory.com/mc/certificate_cdr.guid;jsessionid=967A87CEE961631A9363751828775CBB](https://www.airsdirectory.com/mc/certificate_cdr.guid;jsessionid=967A87CEE961631A9363751828775CBB).

Strategic Diversity and Inclusion Recruiting and Retention Certification  
As nursing attempts to increase the diversity within its ranks, one method to accomplish this goal is to redefine recruitment strategies and refocus toward non-traditional sources of potential nursing candidates. To that end, image is an important aspect to recruit learners of diverse backgrounds into nursing by promoting an inclusive image. This means that images of diverse individuals should be included in all marketing materials, to include males, as well as nurses of color. Finally, there is a need to increase recruitment from alternative pathways. These pathways may include paramedic to RN and foreign-trained physicians to RN. There is a dearth of sources that have had limited recruitment activities aimed at them from the nursing profession. This section describes several potential sources in the areas of educational pipelines, image, and alternative pathways, including bridge programs.

**Educational Pipelines**

The first underutilized source of diverse students is in the primary educational system. The discussion of nursing as a career option needs to begin in elementary and middle school. Several programs have been developed to reach this age group. These programs include offerings through organizations that serve children, such as the Boy Scouts, as well as several summer nursing camps for high school students,

**ARTICLES**


**HEALTH CAREER CAMPS**


Marian University Nurse Camp. [http://www.marianuniversity.edu/nursecamp/](http://www.marianuniversity.edu/nursecamp/)

Marquette University Summer Science Enrichment Program. [http://www.marquette.edu/health-careers-opportunities/summer-science.php](http://www.marquette.edu/health-careers-opportunities/summer-science.php)

Milwaukee School of Engineering Focus on Nursing. [http://www.msoe.edu/community/admissions/undergraduate/page/1843/summer-Programs-for-nursing](http://www.msoe.edu/community/admissions/undergraduate/page/1843/summer-Programs-for-nursing)


Wisconsin Area Health Education Center Health Careers Summer Camps. [http://www.ahec.wisc.edu/health-careers-summer-camps](http://www.ahec.wisc.edu/health-careers-summer-camps)

**WEBSITES**


**Alternative Pathways**

There are many alternative pathways for diverse students to enter the nursing profession.

Traditionally, these pathways have consisted of accelerated nursing programs for second degree students. While these are still largely popular programs, there are other alternative pathways to consider. Minority students can also be recruited through minority, community, professional, and social groups; minority fraternities and sororities; and minority alumni mailing lists. It is also a sound strategy to encourage other minority students to assist with outreach at recruitment events, since minority students are more attracted to campuses where there is a visible minority cohort.8,9 Transfer students from community, junior, and technical colleges are also a valuable resource for recruiting minority students, since a significant number of ethnically and racially diverse students attend 2-year colleges. Colleges, universities, professional organizations, and corporations should encourage linkages and articulation agreements between 2- and 4-year institutions to encourage promising community college students to pursue further study.10,11

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ARTICLES


WEBSITES

Bridge Programs
There are also several programs that offer bridge programs for either paramedics or military medics to transition into nursing roles. These programs are often tailored to the needs of the student, focusing more on critical thinking and nursing knowledge development rather than assessments and foundational skills. Since paramedics and military medics are oftentimes male or diverse in their backgrounds, these programs offer a means of increasing diversity in nursing. Links to these programs are listed below.

WEBSITES


Another important aspect to recruit learners of diverse backgrounds into nursing is to promote an inclusive image. Images of diverse individuals should be included in all marketing materials, to include males, as well as nurses of color. Listed below are different marketing materials that are available.

**WEBSITES**


Paramedic to RN. The best online paramedic to RN programs. [http://www.paramedictorn.org/](http://www.paramedictorn.org/)
RETENTION AND INTEGRATION STRATEGIES:
ACADEMIC/SOCIOECONOMIC SUPPORT

Findings from studies conducted to facilitate recruitment, retention, and program completion of underrepresented minority nursing students reveals that multi-dimensional approach interventions allowed programs to tailor the needs and resources for the targeted group of students. Interventions addressed academic factors, such as technology support, emotional and moral support, remedial and skill-building activities, tutorial support, program mentoring, financial support, and professional socialization.12

ARTICLES


**BOOKS**


**WEBSITES**

AACN: Enhancing Diversity in the Workforce.  
[http://www.aacn.nche.edu/media-relations/fact-sheets/enhancing-diversity](http://www.aacn.nche.edu/media-relations/fact-sheets/enhancing-diversity)


**REPORTS**


**CERTIFICATIONS**

Educational Policy Institute. *Retention 101 Certification Program*.  

Educational Testing Service. *SuccessNavigator ®*.  
[http://www.ets.org/successnavigator/?WT.mc_id=scn_22799_gg_sn020&gclid=CJr95ZCsq8ICFc1_Mgod-DMA8w](http://www.ets.org/successnavigator/?WT.mc_id=scn_22799_gg_sn020&gclid=CJr95ZCsq8ICFc1_Mgod-DMA8w)
The National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) is administered by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing. Nursing graduates must pass this examination to work as a licensed practical nurse (LPN) or as a registered nurse (RN). The main concern is that graduates from nursing programs have the necessary preparation to pass the exam, thereby meeting a minimum standard of competency for patient care.

There are many resources for NCLEX review, including review books, YouTube websites, and refresher or review courses. However, there are limited resources on NCLEX preparation and very few resources on NCLEX preparation for students in targeted underrepresented groups. Gaps clearly exist regarding resources addressing NCLEX preparation for diverse populations of student nurses, as well as for those seeking to offer preparation assistance.

**ARTICLES**


WEBSITES
A search (January 20, 2015) on the term ‘NCLEX preparation’ indicated that there were about 390,000 results.

DISSERTATIONS/THESSES


PROMISING PRACTICES

CAREER TRANSITION ISSUES AND STRATEGIES

It is imperative that minorities and men are recruited into nursing programs and retained in those programs. It is equally important that nurses of underrepresented groups advance in their nursing careers. Minority nurses need to be recognized as potential leaders and mentored in leadership roles. Potential nurse scholars and educators need to be identified and encouraged to further their education and advance in those careers.

There is little research on career transition issues and strategies for nurses from underrepresented groups. Research shows that academic, financial, social, and aspirational barriers to career transition and advancement exist for minority nurses. Strategies for success include mentoring, individualized career and educational advising, academic enrichment opportunities, and provision of an inclusive environment. Role models and mentors are key components. More research is required to determine how best to overcome barriers and support minority nurses and men as they advance in their careers.

ARTICLES


**BOOKS**


WEBSITES
American Association of Colleges of Nursing. *Diversity in nursing.*
http://www.aacn.nche.edu/diversity-in-nursing

Minority Nurse Magazine.
http://www.minoritynurse.com/magazine

INTERESTING PROGRAMS
Duke University. *Nursing bridge to the doctorate.*
http://wssubridge2phd.nursing.duke.edu/

University of Illinois at Chicago. *Urban health program.*
http://www.nursing.uic.edu/current-students/student-resources/urban-health-program