Summit Issues and Perspectives

ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES OF NURSING

“Nursing Excellence through Higher Education”

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Historical Overview- past emphasis on ‘service’ rather than ‘scholarship’

• 1925 - 2,155 diploma programs competing with handful of BSN programs
• 1965 - ANA’s “First Position on Education for Nursing
  – ADN was minimum standard for ‘technical’ nursing practice
  – BSN was minimum for ‘professional’ nursing practice (Donley & Flaherty, 2008)
• 2001 - National Advisory Council on Nurse Education and Practice (NACNEP)
  – Called for 2/3rds of the basic RN workforce to have at least a nursing baccalaureate by 2010
American Association of Colleges of Nursing’s Position Statement

The Baccalaureate Degree in Nursing as Minimal Preparation for Professional Practice
Rapidly expanding clinical knowledge and mounting complexities in health care mandate that professional nurses possess educational preparation commensurate with the diversified responsibilities required of them. As health care shifts from hospital-centered, inpatient care to more primary and preventive care throughout the community, the health system requires registered nurses who not only can practice across multiple settings - both within and beyond hospitals - but can function with more independence in clinical decision-making, case management, provision of direct bedside care, supervision of unlicensed aides and other support personnel, guiding patients through the maze of health care resources, and educating patients on treatment regimens and adoption of healthy lifestyles. In particular, preparation of the entry-level professional nurse requires a greater orientation to community-based primary health care, and an emphasis on health promotion, maintenance, and cost-effective coordinated care.

http://www.aacn.nche.edu/Publications/positions/baccmin.htm
BSN-preferred

• ANA
• INA
• AACN
• Magnet Hospitals - prefer to hire BSNs
• Pew Health Professions Commission
• NLN/Carnegie National Survey supports doctorates for all nursing faculty, even in pre-licensure programs
• ANSR (Americans for Nursing Shortage Relief)
Workforce front

• Studies show hospitals able to attract and retain BSNs- owed success to treating nursing leaders as ‘equal’ partners throughout corporate hierarchy
• Normative faculty credential is the doctorate, to command respect among peers and contribute to advance our discipline
• Other professions in Illinois have consistently higher levels of entry-level education requirements- e.g. Masters required for OTs, Speech & Language Pathologists, Social Workers; doctorates required for pharmacists, PTs
BSN RNs promote safety & quality

• Research findings - 10 percent increase in number of BSNs corresponded to a 5 percent decrease in mortality of surgical patients in PA hospitals (Aiken, et.al. 2003)

• Replicated study – showed a lower 30-day mortality rate for patients cared for in Canadian hospitals staffed by higher percentage of BSN prepared nurses (Estabrooks, et.al, 2005)
IACN’s Concerns: BSN at Community Colleges

- Community colleges’ initiatives to grant baccalaureate degrees in nursing
  --mission differ
  --overlapping services
  --misuse of state educational resources
  --increased competition for nursing faculty and clinical sites
IACN’s Illinois Comprehensive Nursing Education Plan (draft 2005)

**Basic Concept:** To connect baccalaureate and higher degree programs and community colleges to build upon the community college base of nursing education, but synergistically advance baccalaureate and higher degrees in nursing using creative and flexible methods of delivery systems, i.e. distance learning.
WARNING

Lawmakers concerned about the shortage of bedside nurses are calling on state boards of nursing to RELAX faculty qualifications.

This would undermine rather than reinforce the transfer of knowledge and skills on which effective and safe nursing practice relies!
How many more years?

1965- First proposed the BSN as entry into practice

2010- 45 years later – the longest discussion in world history!

WHY?
Sleeping Giants

Luther Christman, the former Dean of Rush University College of Nursing’s famous quote:

“Nurses are sleeping Giants. Think what we could do if we woke up!”
Nursing…

• One of the largest health care professions with an estimated 2.9 million licensed RNs in the United States!

• Let’s make it one of the most educated and knowledgeable professions!
Unanswered Questions

• Why have the community colleges continued to flourish and produce the high numbers of ADN RNs?
• Why do high school counselors still insist on telling their students that the associate degree in nursing is only two years?
• Why do we use the NCLEX which is a post graduation examination as a measure of a nursing school’s quality?
References

- http://www.aacn.nche.edu/Publications/positions/baccmin.htm