

Report on Communication Activities With Nursing Education Programs

This report describes the participation of Nursing Consultants for Education of the Texas Board of Nursing (Board) in activities to promote communication with the Texas pre-licensure nursing education programs and stakeholders.

NCLEX Regional Workshop

On April 1, 2016, a National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX®) Regional Workshop for Educators was held at the J.J. Pickle Research Center in Austin, Texas. A one (1) day workshop was offered to faculty, deans, and directors of Texas Professional and Vocational Nursing Education Programs. The workshop agenda included an explanation of the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) process and how the practice analysis results are applied to update the NCLEX® test plans. Additionally, a description of the NCLEX® item development process; and an illustration of the basic principles of Computer Adaptive Testing (CAT) were included. The afternoon portion of the workshop was devoted to item-writing, including discussion of NCLEX® alternate item formats. Participants worked in small groups, formulating test questions, using alternate formats, and applying principles of item-writing. The workshop concluded with an explanation of the various NCLEX® reports available to nursing education programs and a discussion of how these may enhance program and student development.

The Austin workshop was well attended, with participation from 83 program deans, directors, coordinators, and/or nursing faculty from professional and vocational nursing education programs across the state. The two (2) NCSBN workshop presenters, Rachel Reichman, MA, BS, Test Development Associate, and Nicole Williams, MSN, RN-BC, Nursing Content Manager, were appreciated and well-received by the participants.

The informal and anecdotal workshop evaluations were very positive, indicating the content was relevant to educational objectives, which included:

- How the NCLEX® Practice Analysis and NCLEX® Test Plan are used to develop the examination,
- Opportunities to utilize item writing principles,
- Return demonstrations on item writing strategies,
- Identifying opportunities to utilize NCLEX® resources.

Attendees of the day-long workshop reported:

- Greater understanding of the NCLEX® process,

- Plans to share gained knowledge with colleagues,
- That this was a very effective program,
- How best to incorporate the test plan in student testing,
- A request for more education programs in the future.

Many attendees thanked the Nursing Consultants for Education for offering this workshop to Texas nurse educators.

Informal Informational Session

On May 3, 2016, Virginia Ayars, Ed.D, RN, CNE, and Susan Lee, PhD, RN, Nursing Consultants for Education, conducted a two (2) hour informational session for individuals interested in starting a pre-licensure nursing education program in Texas in Room 102 of the William P Hobby Building in Austin, Texas. The purpose of the informal information session is to present and discuss the essential elements of the proposal for new pre-licensure nursing education program process. Participants are provided an opportunity to meet the Nursing Consultants for Education and network with other individuals who are in the process of proposal development. Ten (10) individuals representing seven (7) potential new vocational, associate and baccalaureate degree nursing programs attended the workshop. Dr. Ayars presented an overview of the Board functions, a brief review of Board Education Rules 214 and 215, and discussed the proposal process in detail. Participant feedback was very positive. Several attendees personally thanked Board Staff for the session information. Nursing Consultants for Education plan to host another informal information session in late 2016 or early 2017.

Self-Study Conference Calls

Rule 214.4(c)(2)(B) requires that the first (1st) time a nursing program has a passing score of less than eighty (80) percent for first-time NCLEX-PN® candidates a Self-Study Report (SSR) is to be written and submitted to Board Staff by a specified deadline. In the 2015 NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate year (January 1, 2015 - December 31, 2015), fourteen (14) pre-licensure vocational nursing education programs had a first-time candidate examination pass rate below the benchmark of eighty (80) percent. During May and June 2016, Board Staff hosted thirty (30) to sixty (60) minute conference calls with each of the fourteen (14) Program Directors and their respective faculty. During each call, Program Directors and faculty were provided the opportunity to share their findings of ongoing evaluation. Program Directors and faculty freely asked questions about the process and were enthusiastic in sharing their results thus far. Each SSR, due July 15, 2016, will be reviewed by the Nursing Consultant for Education assigned to the program and a response letter will be provided to each program acknowledging receipt. The response letter will include any suggestions or comments specific to corrective actions, as well as any requests for additional or clarifying information, if needed. Additionally, Nursing Consultants for Education request an update for each of the corrective measures identified in the Self-Study Report.

This activity continues to be highly worthwhile. Program Directors and faculty had begun the in-depth program analysis and shared their findings with the Nursing Consultants for Education.

Program Directors expressed appreciation for the support and direction from the Nursing Consultants for Education, confirming that the calls were a positive experience. Faculty express appreciation at being encouraged to take ownership of the issues to facilitate corrective measures for improvement. Nursing Consultants for Education had the opportunity to not only become more familiar with their assigned programs, learning of their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges, but, also, to forge stronger relationships.

New Deans/Directors/Coordinators Orientation

Board Rule 214 Vocational Nursing Education and Rule 215 Professional Nursing Education require that a newly appointed dean, director, interim dean or director, or coordinator of a nursing education program attend a face-to-face orientation provided by Board Staff. At the time of appointment and approval, a new dean/director/coordinator receives an electronic version of the *Nursing Education Program Director Orientation Module* from Board staff. The learning module provides basic content regarding Rules 214 and 215. Completion of the module is required prior to attendance at a face-to-face orientation workshop, which is the second (2nd) part of the orientation process for new program administrators.

A face-to-face, day-long session of the Deans/Directors/Coordinators Orientation was held in the William P. Hobby Building in Austin, Texas on June 24, 2016. The session complements and enhances the self-paced orientation module, providing an opportunity for participants to further their knowledge of Rules 214 and 215 through staff presentations, question and answer segments, and group discussions.

The June workshop was attended by thirty-seven (37) administrators, deans, directors, and coordinators from professional and vocational nursing education programs throughout the state. Nursing Consultants for Education presented a myriad of topics, including: an overview of the Texas Board of Nursing, Education Guidelines, Clinical Learning Experiences, Program of Study, and Total Program Evaluation. Mark Majek, Director of Operations, introduced the operations staff and discussed the mandatory criminal background check process for students enrolled in pre-licensure nursing education programs. The Director of Enforcement, Anthony Diggs, reviewed the declaratory order process.

Participant evaluations of the session were extremely positive with attendees expressing appreciation for the information and support from Board Staff. The next workshop will be scheduled for Fall 2016.

Nursing Education Department Newsletter

In May, the Nursing Consultants for Education released the latest edition of the electronic newsletter to all pre-licensure nursing education programs in Texas. The newsletter shares education topics, and suggestions regarding the operations of nursing education programs. The topics shared included publishing statements about Board approval and/or accreditation, secrets of effective online courses, nursing education programs with high school entry tracks,

report of the NCLEX® Regional Workshop, determining whether a curriculum change is a major or minor change, 2016: NCLEX® Test Plan, an announcement of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) request for application for the Nursing Innovation Grant Program, and 2016 Program Certificates of Board approval.

The purpose of the electronic education newsletter is to update program directors and faculty, facilitating open communication between nursing education programs and Nursing Consultants for Education. Responses received from program directors are positive, with appreciation voiced to Board Staff for the information shared in recurrent issues.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

This is an informational report. No action is required.