

**Consideration of Change in Approval Status
From Initial Approval to Initial Approval with Warning
Bell Tech Career Institute in Houston, Texas
Vocational Nursing Education Program**

Summary of Request:

Consider the proposed change in approval status for the Bell Tech Career Institute (BTCI) Vocational Nursing (VN) Education Program in Houston, Texas, from Initial Approval to Initial Approval with Warning, based upon the 2014 NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate and non-compliance with Board Rule 214.

Historical Perspective:

- Bell Tech Career Institute (BTCI) VN program was approved October 27, 2011.
- BTCI is licensed by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC).
- The NCLEX-PN® examination pass rates since program inception are provided below:

| NCLEX Year | BON Approval Status | NCLEX-PN® Pass Rate | Number of First-Time Candidates (passed/total) |
|-------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| 2014 | Initial | 58.82% | 10/17 |
| 2013 | Initial (Self-Study) | 37.97% | 11/29 |
| 2012 | Initial | New Program | No candidates |

- The BTCI program director and faculty wrote and submitted a Self-Study Report (SSR) in response to the 2013 NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate of 37.97% as required by §214.4(c)(2)(B).
- Among the nineteen (19) areas identified as potential contributors to the 2013 NCLEX-PN® pass rate were: 1) a lack of standardized computer testing, 2) a lack of faculty orientation and training; 3) inconsistent application of admission standards; 4) a lack of rigor in admission standards; 5) deficient evaluative processes for students and faculty; 6) lack of regularly scheduled faculty meetings; and, 7) a non-operationalized total program evaluation tool.
- Major areas needing corrective actions with accompanying time frames for implementation were identified in the SSR. Some of the corrective measures included: 1) Establish a standardized testing policy and process; 2) Establish faculty continuing education development using “Nurse Tim” and local resources; 3) establish weekly faculty meetings to include a faculty committee structure; 4) implement a remediation program; 5) implement standardized assessment testing for admission applicants, update recruitment process, and institute candidate orientation; and 6) implement the total program evaluation tool.
- At the October 17-18, 2013 Board meeting, Board members accepted the report of the September 10-11, 2013 survey visit made to BTCI. Three (3) requirements were issued to the program. These included: 1) submission of documentation that the program director had full authority to direct the program in all its phases; 2) revision of clinical evaluation tools and program documents to reflect the *Differentiated Essential Competencies* (DECs, 2010); and, 3) evidence of adequate clerical support.

- October 28, 2013, LT. COL (USA Ret) Eugene A. Vecera, M. Ed., BSN, RN was approved as program director of the BTCI VN program.
- Although the program implemented corrective measures to improve the performance of VN graduates on the national licensing examination, the NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate continues to be below 80%. The 2014 NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate was 58.82% with ten (10) of seventeen (17) candidates passing the licensing examination.

Rationales for Staff Recommendations:

Rule 214(c)(3)(A) *related to Approval* states: “A warning may be issued to a program when the pass rate of first-time NCLEX-PN® candidates ... is less than 80% for two (2) consecutive examination years; and the program has been in violation of Board requirements”.

The Education Guideline for writing a Self-Study Report requests that “The effects of the corrective measures should be evaluated as part of the Total Program Evaluation Plan”.

Staff Recommendations:

Move to change the approval status of Bell Tech Career Institute Vocational Nursing Education Program in Houston, Texas from Initial Approval to Initial Approval with Warning based upon the 2014 NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate and noncompliance with Rule 214 identified in the 2014 Self-Study Report and impose the conditions and requirements in the attached Board Order (Attachment #1).

DRAFT LETTER

April 20, 2015

LT COL (USA Ret) Eugene Vecera, M.Ed., BSN, RN
Vocational Nursing Education Program Director
Bell Tech Career Institute
12000 Richmond Ave., Suite 130
Houston, TX 77082

Dear Mr. Vecera:

At the April 16-17, 2015 meeting, the members of the Texas Board of Nursing (Board) discussed the approval status of the Bell Tech Career Institute Vocational Nursing (VN) Education Program in Houston, Texas, based upon the NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate for 2014 and noncompliance with Board Rule 214 identified in the 2014 Self-Study Report. Members of the Board wish to thank you and XXXX for being present at the meeting to answer questions.

Based upon the discussion and review of information, it was the decision of the Board to change the approval status of the Bell Tech Career Institute Vocational Nursing Education Program in Houston, Texas, from Initial Approval to Initial Approval with Warning and impose the conditions and requirements in the attached Board Order.

If you have questions or if we may offer assistance, please contact Board Staff at sandi.emerson@bon.texas.gov or (512) 463-4631.

Sincerely,

Katherine A. Thomas, MN, RN, FAAN
Executive Director

Copy: Raffy Bell, CEO
Texas Workforce Commission

BEFORE THE TEXAS BOARD OF NURSING

In the Matter of:

Bell Tech Career Institute
Vocational Nursing Education Program
in Houston, Texas

ORDER OF THE BOARD

A public meeting of the Texas Board of Nursing, hereinafter referred to as the Board, was held on April 16, 2015, 333 Guadalupe, Tower II, Room 225, Austin, Texas, to consider the approval status of Bell Tech Career Institute Vocational Nursing Education Program in Houston, Texas, pursuant to Section 301.157, Texas Occupations Code and 22 Tex. Admin. Code Chapter 214, based upon the NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate for 2014, and areas of noncompliance with Rule 214 identified in the 2014 Self-Study Report.

After review and due consideration of the filed materials, as well as the presentation by representatives from Bell Tech Career Institute in Houston, Texas, and other interested parties, if any, the Board hereby CHANGES the approval status of the Bell Tech Career Institute Vocational Nursing Education Program in Houston, Texas, from INITIAL APPROVAL to INITIAL APPROVAL WITH WARNING and hereby imposes the following conditions and requirements:

1. In accordance with Rule 214(a)(3)(A), a program survey visit will be conducted by Board Staff during 2015.
2. An evaluation of the effectiveness of the corrective measures outlined in the 2014 Self-Study Report is to be submitted to Board Staff no later than June 1, 2015, per Education Guideline 3.2.1.a.

Entered this 16th day of April, 2015

Katherine A. Thomas, MN, RN, FAAN
Executive Director
On Behalf of the Texas Board of Nursing