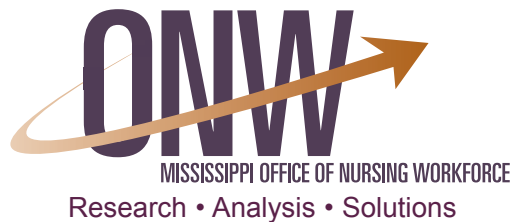


MISSISSIPPI OFFICE OF NURSING WORKFORCE
ANNUAL REPORT
TO MISSISSIPPI BOARD OF NURSING

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Annual Report to the Mississippi Board of Nursing

In 1996, the Mississippi legislature passed the Nursing Workforce Redevelopment Act, which established the Mississippi Office of Nursing Workforce (ONW), under the auspices of the Mississippi Board of Nursing, for the purpose of addressing changes impacting the nursing workforce. ONW identified two major objectives: (1) Develop and implement a systematic annual survey for nursing manpower needs and projections; and (2) Develop a competency model to assist students in articulation and mobility within the multi-level nursing education system. The foundational philosophy for the ONW initiative is the belief that the health and welfare of the people of Mississippi are highly reliant on a competent nursing workforce, and that successful workforce development is dependent on each component of Mississippi's conceptual model.

ONW has completed its sixth year of nursing workforce data analysis from surveys sent to hospitals, home health agencies, and aging and adult services. A full report is submitted to the Mississippi State Department of Health for inclusion in the State Health Plan, which includes nursing vacancy, increase in demand, and turnover data. Additionally, ONW reports 100% participation of Mississippi schools of nursing with the Southeast Regional Education Board (SREB) School of Nursing survey, which includes faculty and student data. ONW compiles the data from the SREB survey and the reports are provided to the Mississippi Council of Deans and Directors of Schools of Nursing annually. Data excerpts from both of these surveys are posted on ONW's website (www.monw.org).

Phase II of the Nursing Education Barriers Identification Survey Project began in the fall of 2003. A state-wide, multi-organizational task force was established to develop strategies to ameliorate the barriers identified in Phase I. Task force members were solicited from various stakeholders such as Deans and Directors, hospital CEO's, and leaders from the MS Department of Education, the Rural Health Association, MS Hospital Association, MS Board of Nursing, MS Nurses' Association, and MS Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning staff.

The Barriers Task Force created four sub-groups to facilitate the work. Each sub-group met over the 2003-2004 fiscal year and made recommendations on ways to reduce the barriers identified in the Phase I Study. The four sub-groups formed were entitled:

- Financial
- Life Demands
- Student Preparation
- Retention/Attrition

The Financial sub-group focused on problems such as lack of participation of all schools of nursing in Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funding opportunities, lack of

funding for indirect educational expenses, difficulty navigating the financial aid process and lack of availability/funding for dependent day care. The Life Demands sub-group dealt with the problem of student difficulty in managing time and money, and lack of health care and insurance coverage.

Student Preparation sub-group work focused on problems related to pre-nursing students' lack of preparation in math and sciences, unrealistic expectations of nursing school, lack of awareness of factors that influence success in nursing school, and the feasibility of requiring a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) course prior to admission. Retention/Attrition sub-group worked on developing a standard definition of attrition among Mississippi schools of nursing and the lack of awareness of resources available to promote student success.

Recommendations from the Task Force include, but are not limited to the following:

- Analyze attrition data collected by Deans and Directors.
- Present findings and strategies developed to Deans and Directors/faculty and other stakeholders.
- Conduct workshop for nursing faculty on teaching and testing strategies, intergenerational issues, and values clarification.
- Develop and maintain website to include support services for students, faculty, and employers.
- Conduct research to measure the impact of Barrier strategies on student attrition rates in BSN and AD programs.
- Identify best practices within schools of nursing that have low attrition rates and high pass rates on NCLEX - Develop Model to be replicated.

Recruitment efforts have been very successful with some schools of nursing reporting long waiting lists and turning away qualified applicants. Recruitment efforts will continue to maintain the pipeline of nursing school applicants. An example of an effort to recruit minority and high-risk students is the High School Nurse Academy Mentorship Project. ONW and the Meridian Public School District Vocational Work Adjustment Project/GED Program (Workforce Investment Area) began collaboration on a project aimed at high school youth with career interests in the healthcare field, especially nursing. The project, called the *Meridian WIA Student Nurse Academy* (Academy), began November 2003, with the selection of 20 students from Meridian High School and the Meridian WIA GED program. The program was piloted at Rush Foundation Hospital in January 2004. Partners in this project included Meridian High School, the Meridian Public School District, Rush Hospital, the Twin Districts Workforce Investment Area (Meridian Vocational Work Adjustment Project/GED Program), the Mississippi Development Authority, the Office of Nursing Workforce, and Meridian Community College (Certified Nurse Assistant Program).

Students participating in the Academy were given the opportunity to see firsthand what it would be like to work in a hospital/healthcare environment. The students received tutoring, mentoring, life skills training, and a basic knowledge of medical terminology and nursing skills. The last month of the program was dedicated entirely to a Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA) program.

The program had a 100% success rate with all 20 students completing the Academy. Sixteen of the 18 CNA students took the state certification examination. All 16 of the CNA students passed the written portion of the exam. Nine of the 16 have completed the entire certification process and are now Certified Nurse Assistants. Three are currently employed as CNAs in a healthcare facility and all 16 are enrolled in a pre-healthcare curriculum. Geographic target areas for expansion of the project include the Mississippi Delta, south-central, and the northern regions of the State.

The ONW website (www.monw.org) contains documents and reports related to ONW research and projects, including The Mississippi Competency Model, the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Council on Collegiate Education for Nursing Survey, ONW's Nursing Faculty and Workforce Report to the Mississippi State Department of Health State Health Plan, Nursing Workforce Trends, and the Executive Summary for Barriers to Nursing Education. ONW provides this information to state agencies, employers, and policy-makers for strategic planning and initiative development, and to other states for assistance in their workforce projects.

Governor Haley Barbour, U.S. Assistant Secretary of Labor Emily Stover DeRocco and Senior Vice-President of Strategic Policy Planning of the American Hospital Association Workforce Commission Dr. James Bentley were speakers at the *Healthcare Workforce Summit: Accepting the Challenge*. The Mississippi Office of Nursing Workforce and the Mississippi Development Authority were co-sponsors of the summit to address the effect of Mississippi's healthcare workforce shortage on economic development within the state.

The Summit was a stimulus for the development of partnerships between private industry, governmental, non-profit and faith-based organizations to lower the attrition rates at Mississippi schools of nursing and allied health programs. Invited guests included state legislators, the executive staffs of Mississippi hospitals, the executive staff and board members of Mississippi's Institutions of Higher Learning, members of the Mississippi Board of Education, and other state officials.

In addition to numerous presentations, ONW has co-sponsored workshops with MS Hospital Association, MS Rural Health Association, and the MS Nurses Association. ONW has had two poster presentations accepted by the American Organization of Nurse Executives (AONE) to be presented at the annual convention in April 2005.