

Arizona Consortium Identifies and Prepares for State's Nursing Needs

Establishment of an integrated data system for assessing nursing care work force needs

SUMMARY

From 1996 to 2002, a coalition of Arizona health care organizations worked to strengthen the state's nursing education programs and nursing workforce.

This effort was part of *Colleagues in Caring: Regional Collaboratives for Nursing Workforce Development*—a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) national program initiated in 1994 to address nursing education and workforce issues at the regional level.

Key Results

Under the grants, project staff accomplished the following:

- Developed a Nursing Workforce Information System to track the state's nursing workforce data and the Arizona Forecasting Model to assess the state's future nursing needs.
- Northern Arizona University and five rural community colleges created a consortium to bring baccalaureate nursing education to rural Arizona.
- Consolidated five Phoenix community college nursing programs—each with its own admission requirements and curricula—into one program offered at six locations.
- Established new partnerships between nursing practice and nursing education to help develop the state's nursing workforce. One example is the use of hospital personnel to assist short-staffed faculty with teaching responsibilities.
- Developed a five-year workforce improvement initiative, the Campaign for Caring, endorsed by the Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association.

Funding

RWJF provided three grants totaling \$363,526 to support the project.

THE PROBLEM

In the 1990s, Arizona was at the forefront of the managed care movement, ranking fourth among the states in penetration by commercial health maintenance organizations. As a result, health care delivery was moving away from hospitals to community and home settings. The restructuring often eliminated registered nurse (RN) and licensed practical nurse (LPN) positions without preparing the affected personnel for new nursing roles.

A broad range of Arizona health care interests—including nursing schools, hospitals and managed care plans—recognized that both the industry and education community shared responsibility for the dilemma. The 70-member Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association, which includes a charitable education foundation, led the effort to develop solutions.

THE PROJECT

Under the \$198,530 grant (ID# 029444) that funded the project's first three-year phase, the goals were to:

- Form a well-represented consortium to explore nursing issues.
- Establish a means for assessing and forecasting the state's nursing care needs.
- Foster a flexible nursing education infrastructure able to respond to consumer and employer needs.
- Establish a formal mechanism for maintaining the project's efforts over the long term.

Administratively, the hospital association housed the project in the association's newly created workforce development arm, the Healthcare Institute. Institute staff organized a consortium of approximately 40 individuals representing consumers, nursing organizations, acute and long-term care facilities, health plans, public and private nursing education programs, and government health care agencies.

The consortium created four work groups totaling 200 participants. Supported by institute staff and consultants, the groups investigated forecast modeling; created survey instruments to gather information from nurses, employers and nursing faculty; and conducted focus groups with nurses and health care consumers.

The hospital association obtained a \$15,000 supplemental grant from RWJF (ID# 035308) to help develop a computer system to collect nursing data on a continuous basis as part of the Arizona State Board of Nursing's regular licensing process.

In the second three-year phase—supported by a \$149,996 RWJF grant (ID# 036960)—the structure of the project changed. The consortium disbanded, and seven of its members—representing hospitals, education and the American Nurses Association—

joined the Healthcare Institute advisory board. Downsizing made the project easier to facilitate and helped the Healthcare Institute prepare for post-grant operation, the project director said. Also, in the second phase, the project's focus turned increasingly to the state's growing nursing shortage and strategies to counteract it.

RESULTS

Among project results, as reported to RWJF, were the following:

- Development of the Nursing Workforce Information System permits ongoing tracking of extensive state nursing workforce data. The system, which project personnel created in collaboration with the Arizona State Board of Nursing, employs a 200-question survey that solicits information on nurses' educational needs, workforce mobility and perceived changes in clinical practice. The project also developed the Arizona Forecasting Model to assess the state's future nursing needs. The model's key data input comes from an employer survey created by the project.
- Nursing students have greater access to educational mobility. In part through *Colleagues in Caring* efforts, Northern Arizona University and five rural community colleges created a consortium to bring baccalaureate nursing education to rural Arizona. Another initiative consolidated five Phoenix community college nursing programs—each with its own admission requirements and curricula—into one program offered at six locations. Also, project personnel used *Colleagues in Caring* nursing shortage data to provide information to legislators who were considering legislation mandating development of a statewide plan to double nursing school enrollment by 2007.
- New partnerships between nursing practice and nursing education are in place to help develop the state's nursing workforce. Examples include the use of hospital personnel to assist short-staffed faculty with teaching responsibilities. *Colleagues in Caring* also promoted the organization of after-school programs to interest high school students in nursing careers and helped establish a nurse leadership development program at the Arizona Nurses Association.
- In response to the work of *Colleagues in Caring* and the state's critical shortage of nurses and other health care professionals, the Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association board of directors approved a five-year workforce improvement initiative called the *Campaign for Caring*. (See Afterward for additional information about the campaign.)

Communications

Project personnel made more than 100 presentations to groups in and outside of Arizona, including a presentation on the state's nursing shortage to the state Senate Health Committee. Written products included a monograph, "Arizona Nursing 2000: Issues and Trends," and a fact sheet comparing the state's nursing data with U.S. statistics.

The hospital association website carried news about *Colleagues in Caring* activities in a section of the site devoted to workplace development. Articles about the project appeared in a variety of professional publications, including newsletters of the Arizona Nurses Association and Arizona Medical Association. (See the Bibliography for more details.)

AFTERWARD

The Healthcare Institute launched a five-year (2002–07) community outreach and promotion program to attract more young people, especially minorities, to nursing and other health care professions and to re-instill passion and commitment in the health care workforce. The program, named Campaign for Caring, includes scholarships to nurses willing to practice in hospitals. To fund the campaign, the hospital association is raising \$8 million from industry and local foundations.

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Grant ID # 29444, 35308, 36960 Program area: Human Capital

APPENDIX

Contributors to the Arizona Colleagues in Caring Project

(Current as of the end date of the program; provided by the program's management; not verified by RWJF.)

Phase One

Arizona Nurses Association

Arizona Nursing Network

Arizona Organization of Nurse Executives

Arizona State University, College of Nursing

Arizona Statewide Council on Nursing

Carondelet Health Care of Arizona

Flinn Foundation

HealthPartners of Arizona

John C. Lincoln Hospital and Health Center

Maricopa Community Colleges

Mercy Healthcare of Arizona

Nursing Partnerships: Education and Practice

Practice and Associate Degree Council

Samaritan Health System

University of Arizona, College of Nursing

University of Phoenix, College of Nursing

Walter O. Boswell Memorial Hospital

Phase Two

Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association

Arizona Heart Hospital

Arizona Nurses Association

Baptist Hospitals and Health Systems

Catholic Healthcare West

Cigna Healthcare of Arizona

Copper Queen Community Hospital

El Dorado Medical Center

Hacienda de los Angeles

Health Temp

Hospice of the Valley

John C. Lincoln Health Network

Kathy Malloch, Ph.D.

Lutheran Healthcare Network

Maricopa Community Colleges

Maricopa Integrated Health Systems

Mayo Clinic Hospital

Mount Graham Community Hospital

Northern Arizona Healthcare

Northwest Medical Center

Paradise Valley Hospital

Phoenix Children's Hospital

Practical and Associate Council of Nurse

Educators

Samaritan Health System

Scottsdale Healthcare

Sierra Vista Hospital

Staffing Partners

Sun Health Corporation

University of Phoenix

Van Slyck & Associates

Vencor Hospital-Phoenix

Western Arizona Regional Medical Center

William M. Mercer



BIBLIOGRAPHY

(Current as of date of the report; as provided by the grantee organization; not verified by RWJF; items not available from RWJF.)

Articles

McNamara A. "Mind the Gap: Transitions in Nursing Education and Care Delivery Systems." *Nursing Administration Quarterly*, 25(1): 39–50, 2000.

McNamara A. "One State's View of the Nursing Shortage." *Creative Nursing*, 6(2): 8–11, 2000.

Roberts F, Sheehy CM, McNamara A, Verran J and Ferketich S. "Covered Lives and Seamless Systems: Nursing Workforce Development and Integration in Arizona's Managed-Care Environment." *Journal of Nursing Administration*, 28(10): 4–7, 1998. Abstract available online.

Reports

Colleagues in Caring. Tempe, AZ: Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association, 1996. Brochure, 2,500 copies produced, 2,250 copies distributed.

Health Care Today: Careers and Opportunities. Newspaper inserts promoting a positive image for health careers. In *The Arizona Republic*, Phoenix, February 20, April 3, May 8 and June 26, 2002.

McNamara A and Roberts F. A *Tribute to Nursing*. Tempe, AZ: Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association, 1999.

McNamara A and Roberts F. *Arizona Nursing: Issues and Trends 2000*. Tempe, AZ: The Healthcare Institute, Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association, 2000.

The Picture of Health Care. Tempe, AZ: The Healthcare Institute, Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association, 1997. Brochure, 5,000 copies produced, 1,000 copies distributed.

Quick Guide to Nursing Practice. Tempe, AZ: Arizona Nurses Association, 1999 and 2000. Brochure, 1,000 copies printed and distributed.

Audio-Visuals and Computer Software

A Tribute to Nursing, a 20-minute video celebrating the nursing profession.

Choose Healthcare, an eight-minute video to encourage middle and high school students to consider careers in health care.

Grantee Websites

www.azhha.org. Includes a section on nursing workforce development issues and activities of the Arizona *Colleagues in Caring* project. Phoenix: Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association, 1997.

Sponsored Conferences

"A Tribute to Nursing," May 3, 1999, Phoenix. Attended by 950 individuals from Arizona health care facilities.

"Keys to the Executive Suite: Competencies for Opening the Door." March 2, 2000, Tempe, AZ. Attended by 50 Arizona health care leaders. Six panels.