Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Published: October 15, 2004
Program Results Report
Grant ID: 29445, 36961

California Consortium Identifies and Prepares for State's Nursing Needs

Colleagues in Caring: Regional Collaboratives for Nursing Work Force Development (Phase 2)

SUMMARY

From 1996 to 2002, a consortium of California health care leaders collected and analyzed state nursing workforce data and promoted initiatives to strengthen the state's nursing education system and nursing corps.

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 grant, project staff reported the following accomplishments to RWJF and in various publications:

- The consortium established an ongoing nursing workforce database and forecasting process that continues to provide information to health care planners and government policymakers.
- Data generated and disseminated by the consortium identified the dimensions of California's nursing shortage and possible solutions.
- The consortium's projections of an oncoming nursing shortage and its recommendations for action provided support for public policy decisions to strengthen California's nursing education system.
- The project advanced efforts to enhance nurses' educational mobility and to implement a competency-based differentiated plan linking pay to skill and education.

Funding

RWJF provided two grants totaling $349,031 to support the project.

THE PROBLEM

Managed care expanded rapidly in California in the 1980s and by the early 1990s covered more than half the population. With this restructuring came a shift in care from hospitals to out-patient, community and other non-acute care settings.

In 1992 representatives of more than 35 nursing groups, health care organizations, and state regulatory and planning agencies formed the California Strategic Planning Committee for Nursing (CSPCN) to plan strategically for a nursing workforce appropriate to California's changing health care needs.

To provide reliable data for planning and public policy decision-making, the consortium developed a model to forecast future nursing requirements. In addition to state agency data on active nurses and nursing students, the model incorporated the future hiring intentions of employers of nurses through an employer survey.

The consortium's initial forecast projected that while the state's total number of nursing positions would remain constant, approximately 4,000 positions would move from inpatient to outpatient settings by 1998. The consortium sought funding from RWJF's *Colleagues in Caring* program to continue its work.

THE PROJECT

Under the first three-year RWJF grant of $199,409, the project goals were to:

- Refine the data collection process and continue to evaluate workforce supply-and-demand trends.
- Develop strategic plans to align the nursing workforce with identified health care delivery needs.
- Incorporate the consortium's data and planning activities into permanent functions of a state agency.

The CSPCN consisted of the following organizations with paid lobbyists: the California Healthcare Association (hospitals), the California Organization of Nurse Leaders, and the American Nurses Association-California; in addition, the executive director of the Board of Registered Nursing was a member of CSPCN and a member of the executive branch. It formed a series of work groups overseen by a steering committee and supported by the project director and a part-time consultant.

The work groups continued collecting supply data and conducted a second employer survey. They also undertook additional surveys, including one to determine the state's nursing school faculty needs and another to find out how long California nurses over age 50 planned to continue working. The CSPCN used these data to develop workforce

improvement initiatives and promote legislation to increase funding for nursing education.

In the second three-year phase—supported by an RWJF grant of $149,622—the consortium divided into four "implementation teams" to fulfill needs identified in the earlier phase. One major effort involved adoption and pilot testing of a plan to tie nurses' compensation to skill and educational achievement (known as competency-based differentiated practice).

Also, aided by a $100,000 grant from the Helene Fuld Health Trust, project personnel worked to develop strategies to reduce transfer requirements, course prerequisites and other barriers that restrict nurses' ability to advance from one educational level to another.

Additionally, one team investigated strategies to increase recruitment and retention of nurses from ethnically diverse backgrounds; a consortium member made a recruitment video, but a lack of funding stymied plans to distribute copies of the video to middle and high school guidance counselors.

RESULTS

The following were among project results, as reported to RWJF and described in various publications by consortium leaders:

- **The consortium established an ongoing nursing workforce database and forecasting process that continues to provide information to health care planners and government policymakers.** The California Board of Registered Nursing created a Nursing Workforce Advisory Committee that took over the consortium's data functions on a permanent basis at the end of RWJF funding. In addition, a number of other *Colleagues in Caring* sites replicated the California forecasting model for use in their states.
- **Data generated and disseminated by the consortium identified the dimensions of California's nursing shortage and possible solutions.** For example, the consortium reported in 1999 that although most California registered nurses were graduates of two-year associate degree nursing programs, employers intended to reduce use of two-year-degree nurses and hire more nurses with bachelor's and graduate degrees. In response, the consortium recommended state support to increase baccalaureate enrollment. Data from a 2001 survey of California nursing school administrators projected 333 faculty vacancies in the following two years. In response, the consortium recommended flexibility in faculty selection criteria and incentives to help persuade nurses with doctoral degrees or advanced specialty training to choose nursing education as a career.
- **The consortium's projections of an oncoming nursing shortage and its recommendations for action provided support for public policy decisions to**

strengthen California's nursing education system. Consortium leaders cited the forecasts in their promotion of legislation that directed the state community college and university systems to produce a plan to increase the number of graduating nurses. The legislation passed and the resulting plan, which incorporated the consortium's findings, called for increased funding for state-supported nursing programs and increased financial aid for nursing students.

- **The project advanced efforts to enhance nurses' educational mobility and to implement a competency-based differentiated plan linking pay to skill and education.** Although the consortium itself did not achieve statewide adoption of these reforms, its work helped stimulate ongoing initiatives by other groups, including two educational mobility efforts by state educators.

Communications

The consortium issued and distributed reports highlighting its survey findings and policy recommendations. It also posted findings and other nursing workforce information on a special section of the University of California, Irvine, Health Sciences website. In addition, the consortium's Career Mobility Implementation Team posted career information on a section of the California State University Chico School of Nursing website.

Project leaders wrote articles about the consortium's work for nursing-related publications and made numerous presentations to nursing groups. They also testified on nursing issues before state legislative committees and provided consultation to other *Colleagues in Caring* sites. In cooperation with state regulators, the consortium held two "nursing summits" in Sacramento during the project period.

Both conferences—in January 1998 and October 1999—addressed differentiated practice and related education issues. The first drew about 600 nurses from across California, the second more than 1,000. The consortium also conducted smaller, regional forums in the state. Consortium activities received coverage in California newspapers and nursing publications. (See the Bibliography for details of some of these dissemination activities.)

AFTERWARD

The consortium held its final meeting in spring 2002 and transferred its data functions to the newly created Nursing Workforce Advisory Committee of the Board of Registered Nursing, (916) 324-2715. Several consortium members joined the advisory committee.

Prepared by: Michael H. Brown
Reviewed by: Janet Heroux and Molly McKaughan
Program Officers: Terrance Keenan and Susan B. Hassmiller
Grant ID # 29445, 36961
Program area: Human Capital

APPENDIX

Sources of Direct Financial Support to the California 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

ANA/California, $1,000

Board of Registered Nursing, $40,000

California Association of Colleges of Nursing, $2,928

California Coalition of Local Health Department Nursing Directors, $200

California Vocation Nursing Educators, $1,000

Kaiser Permanente, $40,000

Kaiser Permanente Southern California Medical Group, $35,000

Sutter, $25,000

UniHealth, $10,000

University of California, Irvine, College of Medicine, $35,838

Phase Two

Board of Registered Nursing, $30,485

Helene Fuld Health Trust, $66,626

Kaiser Permanente, $30,000

Office of Statewide Healthcare Planning and Development, $20,000

St. Johns Health Foundation, $6,000

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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

Articles

Berlin LE and Sechrist KR. "The Shortage of Doctorally Prepared Nurse Faculty: A Dire Situation." *Nursing Outlook*, 50(2): 5056, 2002. Abstract available online.

Fox S, Jones D, Walker P, Lewis EM, Keating SB and Turner SO. "Strategically Planning for the Future of Nursing in California." *Journal of Nursing Administration*, 29(2): 4–6, 13, 1999.

Fox S and Welch D. "Project Reports Strategies for Educational Mobility in Nursing." *DIRECTline*, Winter, 2000.

Harlow J, Duell D, Steeg DV and Nenner V. "Information Dissemination and Marketing in California." *Journal of Nursing Administration*, 29(4): 6–8, 1999.

Keating SB. "Developing a Strategic Plan for the Nursing Work Force: The California Experience." *Home Care Provider*, 2(2): 52–53, 1997.

Keating SB. "Developing a Strategic Plan for the Nursing Work Force: The California Experience." *HRSA Primary Care Fellows Society Newsletter*, (February) 1997.

Keating SB. "Developing a Strategic Plan for the Nursing Work Force. The California Experience." *Cost and Quality*, 3(3): 19–21, 1997.

Keating SB. "Education and Practice Partnerships in California." *Journal of Professional Nursing*, 13(6): 337–343, 1997. Abstract available online.

Keating SB and Sargent A. "Testing California's Differentiated Practice Model through Industry and Education Partnerships." *Nursing Administration Quarterly*, 26(1): 24–28, 2001.

Keating SB and Sechrist KR. "The Nursing Shortage in California: The Public Policy Role of the California Strategic Planning." *Online Journal of Issues in Nursing*, 6(1): Manuscript 2, 2001.

Lewis EM. "California's AHECs: Early Players in Nursing Workforce Initiatives." *National AHEC Bulletin*, 18(1): 24–25, 2002.

Lewis EM. "Enhancing Cultural Diversity in Nursing Workforce." *National AHEC Bulletin,* 18(1): 25, 2002.

Lewis EM, Sechrist KR, Schultz MA and Keating SB. "California Strategic Planning Committee for Nursing: Experiences and Challenges." *Journal of Nursing Administration,* 27(3): 3–5, 1997.

Martin-Holland J, Bello-Jones T, Shuman A, Rutledge DN and Sechrist KR. "Ensuring Cultural Diversity Among California Nurses." *Journal of Nursing Education,* 42(6): 245–248, 2003. Abstract available online.

Sechrist KR, Lewis EM and Rutledge DN. "Data Collection for Nursing Work Force Strategic Planning in California." *Journal of Nursing Administration,* 29(6): 9–11, 1999.

Walker P. "California's Response to the Nursing Shortage." *Surgical Services Management,* 5(May): 36, 1999.

Reports

CSPCN Tri-Partnership Project Fact Sheet. California Strategic Planning Committee for Nursing, 2000.

Faculty Needs in California. California Strategic Planning Committee for Nursing, 2001.

Fox S, Walker P, Bream T and the Education/Industry Interface Work Group of the California Strategic Planning Committee for Nursing/Colleagues in Caring. *California's Framework for Competency-based Role Differentiation in Nursing.* Sacramento, CA: Association of California Nurse Leaders, 1999.

Fox SD and Welch D. *Strategies for Educational Mobility in Nursing: A Report of the California Educational Mobility Project.* Sacramento, CA: Association of California Nurse Leaders, 1999.

Phase II Fact Sheet. California Strategic Planning Committee for Nursing, 1999.

RN Pre-Licensure Nursing Education Slots. California Strategic Planning Committee for Nursing, 2001.

Sechrist KR and Lewis EM. *Planning for California's Nursing Work Force: Final Report of the Nursing Work Force and Education Forecasting Initiative.* Sacramento, CA: ONE-California, 1996.

Sechrist KR, Lewis EM and Rutledge DN. *Planning for California's Nursing Work Force: Phase II Final Report.* Sacramento, CA: Association of California Nurse Leaders, 1999.

Sechrist KR, Lewis EM and Rutledge DN. *Planning for California's Nursing Work Force: Phase III Final Report.* Sacramento, CA: Association of California Nurse Leaders, 2002.

Grantee Websites

www.cohs.uci.edu/nursing/CSPCN_archive.shtml. A section of the University of California, Irvine, Health Sciences website that includes reports, news and other information about California's nursing workforce. Irvine, CA: California Strategic Planning Committee for Nursing, 1997.

www.csuchico.edu/nurs. A section of the website of the California State University Chico School of Nursing devoted to nursing career information. Chico, CA: Career Mobility Implementation Team of the California Strategic Planning Committee for Nursing, 2001.

Sponsored Conferences

"Nursing Summit," January 22, 1998, Sacramento, CA. Attended by approximately 600 California nurses interested in the topic of differentiated practice and related education issues.

"Nursing Summit," October 7, 1999, Sacramento, CA. Attended by approximately 1,000 California nurses interested in the topic of differentiated practice and related education issues. One keynote presentation, five presentations.

Presentations and Testimony

Sarah Keating, testimony to the California Senate Committee on Business and Professions, March 2, 1998.

Karen Sechrist, "California's Strategic Planning Model," at the American Nurses Association Invitational Conference, March 1, 1999, Washington.

Representatives of California Strategic Planning Committee for Nursing, testimony in favor of AB655 Scott Public Post Secondary Education Nursing Report, April 1999.

Sarah Keating, Karen Sechrist and Ellen Lewis, on a symposium "Ensuring a Nursing Workforce for the New Millenium: Initiatives in California, Japan and the United Kingdom," at the International Congress of Nursing Centennial Celebrations, June 27–July 1, 1999, London, England.

Deloras Jones and Sarah Keating, "Colleagues in Caring: Nursing Work Force Initiatives," at the Forum on Healthcare Leadership, September 24, 1999, Boca Raton, FL.

Karen Sechrist and Ellen Lewis, "Adequacy of California's Nursing Work Force," to the Advisory Committee to Implementation of Assembly Bill 655, Scott Bill," January 26, 2000, Sacramento, CA.

Karen Sechrist, "Phase II: CSPCN/CIC Supply and Demand," at the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, Area 1, March 17, 2000, Jackson Hole, WY.

Karen Sechrist and Ellen Lewis, "Nurses: The Coming Shortage," to the Assembly Health Committee, April 21, 2000, Santa Ana, CA. Written request from Assemblyman Lou Correa.

Sarah Keating, "The Nursing Shortage," to the California Assembly, October 30, 2001, Sacramento, CA. Request from Assemblywoman Helen Thompson.