Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Published: October 15, 2004
Program Results Report
Grant ID: 29456, 36972

Kansas City Consortium Identifies and Prepares for Region's Nursing Needs

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

SUMMARY

From 1996 through 2002, a consortium based at the University of Missouri - Kansas City School of Nursing developed a web-based nursing career information service for prospective and current nurses.

The project was part of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) national program *Colleagues in Caring: Regional Collaboratives for Nursing Work Force Development*, initiated in 1994 to address nursing education and workforce issues at the regional level.

Key Results

As reported to RWJF, the consortium accomplished the following:

- Established a Web-based network of information resources that help prospective and active nurses identify educational, scholarship and job opportunities.
- Increased coordination among area nursing schools.
- Established an ongoing nursing career promotional campaign.
- Established a nonprofit organization—Health Resource Partners—to develop Kansas City's health care workforce.

Funding

RWJF supported the project from 1996 to 2002 with two grants totaling $346,964.

THE PROBLEM

In 1992 hospital nurse executives and nurse educators in the greater Kansas City, Mo., area established a task force to address nursing workforce issues in the city and 12 surrounding counties, including four in Kansas.

The group shared clinical and academic expertise and took other cooperative steps. The participants, however, agreed that a stronger collaborative effort between nursing education and nursing practice was needed to enhance nursing opportunities in the 5,000-square-mile region. Expanded to include representatives of home health agencies, long term-care facilities, public health agencies and managed care organizations, the consortium applied to the *Colleagues in Caring* program for funding.

THE PROJECT

Under the first three-year RWJF grant of $199,409, the 80-member consortium hired a staff, organized into six committees, and focused on collecting and analyzing workforce data and improving the region's academic system. Among its principal activities, the consortium:

- Surveyed nurse employers and health care experts to establish databases identifying the nursing workforce and related supply-and-demand factors. (See the Bibliography for a list of project surveys.)
- Developed an 80-page environmental scan of the region's demographics and health indicators to estimate future nursing needs.
- Surveyed nursing school personnel to determine the types of education programs in the area, obtain enrollment and graduation data, and develop a faculty profile. Project personnel conducted focus groups of newly graduated nurses and nurse managers to better understand the education system's preparation of nurses for the workplace.
- Developed Internet information resources to help prospective and active nurses identify education and career opportunities.

In the second three-year phase—funded by a $149,622 RWJF grant—the project leadership responded to the region's growing nursing shortage by developing a nurse recruitment campaign.

RESULTS

The following were among key project results reported to RWJF:

- **Through extensive use of the Internet, the project established a network of information resources that help prospective and active nurses identify educational opportunities, scholarship possibilities, job openings and upcoming nursing-career events in the area.** For example, the project implemented an online job bank as well as a directory of nursing continuing-education courses searchable by topic. Using the project's Web technology, a nurse who wants to switch to a new specialty can complete an online career assessment and receive information on the additional competencies necessary and where to seek the relevant education. (See the

Communications section for more detail about the project's several website addresses.)

- **The project increased coordination among area nursing schools.** One project offshoot was development of a collaborative neonatal nurse practitioners program by four nursing schools (University of Missouri at Kansas City and St. Louis, Kansas University, and Wichita State University). Also, through the project's websites, project staff disseminated the Missouri and Kansas plans for facilitating the advancement of nursing students from one nursing education program to another.
- **The project established an ongoing nursing career promotional campaign that includes production and dissemination of brochures, posters, postcards and a "Why Choose Nursing" video.**
- **The project established a freestanding, ongoing nonprofit organization—Health Resource Partners (HRP)—as a permanent home for efforts to develop metropolitan Kansas City's health care workforce, including practitioners outside the nursing field, such as radiology and medical lab technicians.** Project leaders incorporated HRP in April 1999 and gradually transferred consortium functions and staff to it. Designed to be an "entrepreneurial nonprofit," HRP generated $99,164 in earned income during the project period, including receipts from sale of nursing recruitment materials, such as brochures and the video, and information services. For example, while use of the online job bank is free to job seekers, employers pay a fee to list vacancies. HRP also sought to sustain its operations through grants from private and government sources.

Communications

In the first phase, the project established a website with information about the consortium and area opportunities in nursing education and careers. In the second phase, HRP—which bills itself as "a one-stop-shop for health care career information"—developed three additional sites to provide more comprehensive access to career planning:

- *www.healthresource.org* (no longer in existence) provided wide-ranging nursing education and career information, including a listing of upcoming career "fairs" and professional development seminars.
- *www.healthcareworks.org* (no longer in existence) carried paid classified job ads placed by employers and also permitted applicants to post their resumes.
- *www.healthcareeraid.org* (no longer in existence) provided access to a scholarship database that included nontraditional education assistance available from local and state sources.

HRP maintained the project's original website but planned to discontinue it eventually. In addition to disseminating recruitment campaign materials, the project issued reports on survey and data analysis results, published newsletters and press packets, and held

conferences and workshops. Project personnel made presentations to various groups in the region, and the project received coverage in the local media. (See the Bibliography for details.)

AFTERWARD

HRP has a three-year $340,000 grant through the Missouri Division of Workforce Development to help move dislocated and underemployed workers, youth and welfare recipients into health care training and jobs. HRP also is focusing on improving nurses' workplace environment and attracting more nurses into teaching. The HRP staff is working with local groups to replicate the Kansas City workforce development model in four other communities: St. Louis, Joplin and St. Joseph, Mo. and Wichita, Kan.

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APPENDIX

Other Cash and In-Kind Contributors to the Kansas City 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

Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Kansas City, $14,020

Greater Kansas City Collegiate Nurse Educators, $6,500

Greater Kansas City Health Council, $115,798

Greater Kansas City Nursing Consortium, $69,810

Kansas City Area Nurse Executives, $3,150

Kansas Hospital Association, $2,356

North Kansas City Hospital, $204

Prime Health Foundation, $163,090

John and Effie Speas Foundation, $81,250

University of Kansas School of Nursing, $5,142

University of Missouri-Kansas City, $72,146

Phase Two

Ayres Foundation, $50,000

Homer McWilliams Foundation, $87,628

John and Effie Speas Foundation, $497,010

Kansas City Nursing Consortium, $248,903

University of Kansas, $21,959

University of Missouri-Kansas City, $30,324

Victor Speas Foundation, $562,500

Miscellaneous Sponsorships, $128,911

Earned Income (Health Resource Partners), $99,164

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Survey Instruments

"Career Perceptions," Health Resource Partners, fielded spring 2001.

"Education: Nursing Supply and Demand Assessment Survey," Kansas City Colleagues in Caring—Data Collaborative, fielded June 2001.

"Employer Survey," Greater Kansas City Health Council, fielded January 1998.

"Employer Survey," Health Resource Partners, fielded February 2000.

"Enrollment Survey," Greater Kansas City Health Council, fielded May 1997.

"Environmental Scan," Greater Kansas City Health Council, fielded January 1998.

"Enrollment Survey," Health Resource Partners, fielded June 2000.

"Faculty Survey," Greater Kansas City Health Council, fielded May 1997.

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"Internal Health Care Education & Training Survey," Greater Kansas City Health Council, fielded March 1998.

"Nursing Articulation Survey," Kansas City Colleagues in Caring—Articulation Committee, fielded September 2000.

"Nursing Service Administration Survey," Kansas City Colleagues in Caring—Data Collaborative Committee, fielded June 2001.

"Scenario Survey," Greater Kansas City Health Council, fielded January 1998.

"Survey of Deans/Directors," Kansas City Colleagues in Caring—Data Collaborative Committee, fielded March 2002.

Sponsored Conferences

"Missouri Nursing Summit Conference," September 1997, Jefferson City, MO. Attended by 200 people. One presentation.

"Kansas Nursing Conference," June 4, 1998, Hutchinson, MO. Attended by 100 people. One presentation.

"Kansas City Area Health Care Recruiters," April 13, 1999, Kansas City, MO. Attended by 100 people. One presentation.

"MidAmerica Case Management Society," April 13, 1999, Overland Park, KS. Attended by 120 people. One presentation.

"Kansas City Colleagues in Caring 2000 Retreat," July 28, 2000, Kansas City, MO. Attended by 50 people. Four presentations.

"Nursing Career and Education Fair," October 2000, Kansas City, MO. Attended by 276 people. Two presentations.

"Kansas City Colleagues in Caring Spring Seminar," May 2001, Kansas City, MO. Attended by 40 people. Three presentations.

"Workforce Challenges and Solutions," June 15, 2001, Kansas City, KS. Attended by 162 people representing 60 organizations. Examples of organizations represented include Children's Mercy Hospital, Visiting Nurse Association and Kansas Division of Health. One presentation, one workshop.

Presentations and Testimony

Mike Bleich, "The Practice Environment—Sustaining Nurse Workforce Planning and Development," to the National State Board of Nursing, April 14, 2000, Bismarck, ND.

Diane Daldrup, "Connecting the Health Care Community," to the America Hospital Association/Association of Public Relations Executives, January 2001, Orlando, FL.

Mike Bleich and Susan Santos, "Projecting Workforce Trends, Job Competencies and Role Shifts for Staff and Advanced Practice Nurses: A Descriptive Study of Nursing Service Leaders," to the American Organization of Nurse Executives Annual Meeting and Expo, March 14, 2001, Long Beach, CA.