“Addressing the nurse faculty shortage using a comprehensive needs assessment: Preliminary findings”

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## Faculty Disclosure

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- This work was supported by a Nurse Support II Grant from the Maryland Higher Education Commission under the auspices of HSCRC
Session Objectives

1. Identify three findings of the Eastern Shore-Western Shore Faculty Initiative (ES-WSFI) initiative that have the potential to address the nursing faculty shortage.

2. Discuss two similar initiatives at your institution and how this aligns with the findings of ES-WSFI.
Overview

- Background
- Methodology
- Findings
  - Quantitative
  - Qualitative
- Next steps
Background

Multiple factors contribute to the national nurse faculty shortage (AACN, 2017)

1. An aging nurse faculty workforce
2. Anticipated faculty retirements
3. Higher salaries in practice settings
4. Later age of entry into graduate study

“The most successful solutions will address the root causes of the shortage with sustainable solutions, rather than just take a symptom-relief, quick-fix approach” (Kowalski, 2015).
Unique Regional Challenges

The Eastern Shore-Western Shore Faculty Initiative (ES-WSFI) needs assessment was undertaken to identify issues in Maryland.

- Rural, urban and suburban
- Different levels of student preparation
- Lack of diverse faculty
- Insufficient faculty in specialty areas
Steps in Undertaking the Needs Assessment

- Mixed method approach
- University IRB approval
- Recruitment of participant schools
- Collection of demographic and quantitative data
- Identification of administrators for interviews
- Invitation for faculty participation in focus groups
Needs Assessment - Methodology

➢ Quantitative data:
  Online, password-protected surveys
  X-item, Likert-type scale

➢ Qualitative data:
  ➢ Administrator interviews conducted by Salisbury University nursing chair and graduate program director
  ➢ Faculty focus groups conducted by non-nurse
Respondents' Primary Program

- Doctoral
- Master's
- Associate's
- Baccalaureate
Participating Schools

**Associate Degree**
- Carroll County Community College
- Hagerstown Community College
- Harford Community College
- Anne Arundel Community College
- Baltimore County Community College

**BS and higher**
- Morgan State University
- Notre Dame of Maryland
- Stevenson University
- Washington Adventist University
- Frostburg State University
- Towson University
- University of Maryland
## Total Years Teaching

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Difficult to *Recruit* Faculty from Underrepresented Groups

- **Undergraduate**
  - 75% Strongly Agree/Agree
  - 25% Strongly Disagree/Disagree

- **Graduate**
  - 80% Strongly Agree/Agree
  - 10% Strongly Disagree/Disagree
Difficulty Staffing by Clinical Specialty

- OB-AC
- OB-CB
- PEDS-AC
- PEDS-CB
- WH-AC
- WH-CB
- MH-AC
- MH-CB
- LTC

CC
Faculty Focus Groups Findings

- All schools identified an ongoing nursing shortage.
  - Two schools noted financial constraints and administrative decisions to NOT fill vacant positions.
- Insufficient PT/clinical faculty
- Difficult to recruit faculty from under-represented groups
- Mental health, obstetrics/women’s health, pediatrics most challenging clinical specialties to staff

- Top 3 strategies to address faculty shortage
  - Hiring more part-time/adjunct faculty
  - Limiting enrollment
  - Using simulations
Faculty Focus Group Theme-Workload

The faculty shortage was reflected in teaching overload, larger clinical group size, lack of timely mentoring for new faculty and shortages.

– “Our group of faculty take overloads something crazy, to the point of intimidating”

– “Everybody is stretched really, really thin”
Faculty Focus Group Themes - Inability to Engage in Scholarship

The faculty shortage indirectly impacts faculty’s ability to engage in scholarship and meet increasingly stringent promotion requirements.

- “We have fewer people to conduct peer evaluations.”
- “We have four to five open positions at any given time—we are constantly serving on search committees.”
Faculty Focus Group Themes - Recruitment Challenges

Difficulties in recruiting sufficient faculty:
- Poor response to search committees
- Rural environment
- Salary
- Lack of qualified faculty

“Applicants may have been educationally qualified, but their CV didn't support what this current university administration wanted.”
Strategies for Faculty Recruitment

All faculty are involved in varied ways:

• “I keep an eye out in hospitals for good teaching candidates and approach them. ”
• “If I see a dynamic preceptor, I’ll tell them they should do a guest lecture, this plants the seed.”
• “Here we like to grow our own”.
• “Facebook”
• “Connections-word of mouth”
Effects of Faculty Shortage

Low morale:

• “All tired and burned out.”
• “People are frustrated; not sure if it’s the financial situation or the faculty shortage.”
• “We spend a lot of time on non-teaching activities.”
Experiencing the nurse faculty shortage:

- “I spend a lot of time orienting and mentoring new faculty. They are trying to learn new content and a new role.”
- “Faculty searches take a lot of time and effort. Once the new folks are here, they need a lot of support.”
- “PhD prepared faculty are extremely hard to find.”
Administrator Interview Themes

Approaches to recruiting faculty:

- Outreach to alumni
- Word of mouth/connections
- “Grow our own”
- Paid advertising
Administrator Interview Themes

Barriers to recruitment efforts:

- Insufficient pay
- Negative view of academia as a career choice
- Lack of PhD pipeline
Administrator Interviews - Retention Strategies

University-wide mentorship programs pairing new faculty w/faculty in another discipline

Nursing specific approaches
- Informal mentoring by faculty and administrators
- Enhancing partnerships with clinical settings
- Provision of work flexibility: weekend and evening clinical sections and online sections
- Inclusion of adjunct faculty in multiple aspects of academia
Administrator interviews-

What is Needed

- Incentives for seasoned faculty to stay
  - Increased salaries
  - Release time or reduced workloads to provide time for mentorship

- Support for research/research assistants to maximize use of faculty time
Summary

- Nurse faculty shortage is pervasive in Maryland
  - Reduced ability to increase student enrollments to meet workforce needs
  - Doctoral pipeline is limited
  - Faculty morale is of concern
  - Recruitment of clinicians into teaching positions with appropriate support
  - Academic salaries must be addressed
Next Steps

- Continued dialogue both regionally and statewide
- Publication of findings
- New MHEC NSP II funded grant, *E-Cap Portal*, awarded June, 2017
  - Statewide database of available/interested clinicians and schools with open positions
  - One-stop shop for information on becoming an educator
  - Marketing of teaching as a career.
Dissemination of Findings

- Report to joint meeting of participating schools, 10/2016
- Maryland Nurses Association D2 Education summit, 4/2017
- Maryland Action Coalition annual summit, 6/2017
- STTI 28th International Nursing Research Congress, 7/2017
- Maryland Nurses Association annual convention, 10/17
- STTI NERC, Washington, D.C., April 2018
References

