

**Consideration for Change of Approval Status from Initial to Initial with Warning
 Dallas Nursing Institute in Dallas, Texas
 Associate Degree Nursing Education Program**

Summary of Request:

Consider a proposed change in the program approval status of the Dallas Nursing Institute Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) Education Program in Dallas, Texas, based upon the review of the 2011 and 2012 NCLEX-RN® examination pass rates, the 2012 Nursing Education Program Information Survey (NEPIS), and compliance with Texas Board of Nursing (Board) Rule 215.

Historical Perspective:

- Dallas Nursing Institute (DNI) received initial approval to establish an ADN education program at the April 2009 Board meeting and began operation in Summer 2009. The first cohort of 47 students were enrolled in January 2010.
- The NCLEX-RN® examination pass rates for the past two years are:

| Exam Year | NCLEX-RN® Pass Rate | Number of First Time Candidates (Passed/Total) | BON Approval Status |
|-----------|------------------------|--|---------------------|
| 2012 | 65.22% | 15/23 | Initial |
| 2011 | 62.75% | 32/51 | Initial |

- The program currently offers two tracks: a generic ADN track and a Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN) to ADN track.
- DNI, a private for-profit career school owned by ATI Enterprises, also operates a vocational nursing education program that was established in 1991.
- The educational entity holds approval from the Texas Workforce Commission and is authorized to grant degrees by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.
- DNI is nationally accredited by the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES) through December 2016.
- Gwendolyn Gaston, MSN, RN has served as the ADN program director since December 2010 and meets all qualifications set forth by Board Rule 215.6. Administration and Organization.
- Subsequent to the 2011 NCLEX-RN® examination pass rates, the nursing program administrators initiated a comprehensive internal self-study to identify issues related to the 2011 NCLEX-RN® examination pass rates.
- The program implemented a number of corrective measures to improve graduates' success on the NCLEX-RN® examination, but the 2012 NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate is 65.22%.
- The corrective measures included:
 - securing an appropriate variety of rich clinical learning experiences necessary to prepare professional nursing students for safe and competent practice, and
 - a critical evaluation of the program's admission criteria.
- In December 2012, the ADN Program Director reported an enrollment of 38 students, including 30 unlicensed students (generic track) and eight LVNs (LVN to ADN track).
- Due to Board actions at the October 2011 quarterly Board meeting, student enrollment in the ADN program was limited to no more than 50 students to be admitted twice a year until the program achieved full approval. The decision was based on concerns related to availability of appropriate clinical learning experiences for professional nursing students (See Attachment #1).
- According to the 2012 NEPIS, the program of study includes 496 hours of didactic content and is comprised of the following clinical learning experiences:
 - Computer Lab = 48 hours
 - Skills Lab = 96 hours
 - Simulation Lab = 48 hours
 - Patient Care Clinical Situations = 624 hours

- Data submitted on the 2012 NEPIS offer that nine full-time faculty members and five part-time faculty members are employed, with two full-time vacant faculty positions.
- DNI has an articulation agreement with Lubbock Christian University to allow students to complete a Baccalaureate Degree in Nursing.

Pros and Cons:

Pros:

- The program submitted a comprehensive evaluation of factors that may have contributed to the lowered NCLEX-RN® pass rates and corrective measures were instituted and evaluated.
- The administration and faculty conducted an extensive review and evaluation of the curriculum and testing processes.
- The program director has timely responded to all requests from Board Staff.

Cons:

- It is not possible to determine if the corrective measures that were implemented to improve student performance are fully effective due to the limited time period from the dates of implementation of the corrective measures to the end of the 2012 NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate year.

Staff Recommendation:

Move to change the approval status of the Dallas Nursing Institute in Dallas, Texas Associate Degree Nursing Education Program from Initial to Initial with Warning and authorize Board Staff to conduct a survey visit in Spring 2013 as indicated in the attached letter (See Attachment #2).

**Report of Joint Survey Visit and Status of Programs
Dallas Nursing Institute in Dallas, Texas
Vocational and Professional Nursing Education Programs**

Summary:

Consider the report of a survey visit to Dallas Nursing Institute (DNI) in Dallas, Texas, on April 26, 2011, recent media reports, and Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) actions related to the governing entity, ATI Career Training Center.

Historical Perspective:

- Dallas Nursing Institute (DNI) has been approved for both vocational nursing (VN) and associate degree nursing (ADN) programs in Dallas, Texas.
- DNI is approved by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) and has been accredited by the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES) since 1999.
- The DNI **VN program** has been in operation since 1991, and at the time of this report, has one thousand sixteen (1016) students in the program. The 2010 NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate is 80.11% (286/357).
- DNI received approval for an **ADN program** with a LVN-RN track at the April 2009 Board meeting. The program enrolled 50 students beginning in August 2009. At the time of this report there were twenty six (26) students in the program.
- The first graduates from the ADN program completed in December 2010. The 2011 NCLEX-RN® pass rate for the examination year, October 1, 2010 through September 30, 2011, is 62.75% (32/51).
- In March 2010 DNI ownership changed from a sole proprietor to ATI Training Center.
- ATI Career Training Center Texas located in North Richland Hills, Texas, owns and operates sixteen (16) career schools throughout Texas. The schools are primarily trade schools, but some allied health programs are offered as well. **DNI is the only nursing school in the ATI system.**
- During 2010 and 2011, the local Dallas - Fort Worth, Texas media released investigatory reports regarding ATI Career Training Center. The reports centered around deceptive practices and substandard education at ATI schools. DNI was not mentioned.
- A combined, unannounced survey visit was conducted on April 26, 2011, by Robin Caldwell, PhD, RN, BON Education Consultant, and representatives from TWC. The visit was preceded by numerous complaints from students to both the BON and TWC.
- The majority of the complaints came from ADN students, and the complaints centered on educational practices that are under the purview of TWC. However, some complaints suggested possible noncompliance with BON education rules.
- Briefly, students reported that DNI failed to honor agreements made with them under previous ownership, and that there were frequent changes in student policies and grading procedures during the process of their education.
- At the time of the visit, it was reported that all thirty (30) ADN students in the graduating class failed the final exam, however, thirteen (13) were allowed to graduate based upon GPA.
- TWC representatives found no significant violations at the time of the survey visit.
- However, on July 28, 2011, TWC reported to Board Staff that TWC had issued a notice of intent to revoke licenses of all ATI centers in Texas, including DNI, due to substantial misrepresentation of completion, graduation, and employment rates.
- On August 9, 2011, Board Staff were advised by TWC that upon conclusion of their investigation, an agreement had been reached with ATI, preventing closure of all ATI schools in Texas. Instead, TWC would revoke the certificates of approval for twenty-two (22) ATI career school programs. Other ATI schools, including DNI, would be placed on conditional certificate and would receive sanctions, including that no TWC-funded students could be enrolled.
- At the time of this report, Board Staff continue to receive complaints from students in both the VN and ADN programs. The complaints are largely of the same nature as those previously described in this report.

Summary of the April 26, 2011 Survey Visit:

The focus of the BON portion of the April survey visit concentrated on areas of student complaints related to:
compliance with Rules 214.8 and 215.8 Students (adequacy of policies and implementation)
compliance with Rules 214.7 and 215.7 Faculty (adequacy of faculty policies and implementation)

Findings Related to Students:

- Only two vocational students were available for interview by Board Staff even though there were about 1000 students enrolled in the program at that time.
- No ADN students were available for comment, though most complaints being investigated were from ADN students. Thirty (30) students were enrolled in the ADN program at that time.
- Board Staff reviewed student files and student policies, but no evidence of non-compliance was found.
- The ADN director reported that the program is re-evaluating the admission criteria for the ADN program.

Findings Related to Faculty:

- Board Staff interviewed three (3) faculty who teach in both programs.
- The interviews did not indicate non-compliance with Board rules.
- Faculty policies were in place.
- Faculty files reviewed indicated that faculty were qualified to teach in the program.

Findings Related to Clinical Learning Experiences:

- Because of the importance of sound clinical experiences in programs of nursing, Board staff inquired of faculty, ADN and VN directors, and administration about clinical learning experiences.
- Board staff identified areas of concern regarding adequate or appropriate clinical sites in the ADN and VN programs .
- Program directors indicated that DNI had lost some of the clinical contracts for student learning experiences.
- Board Staff requested detailed information about clinical sites including schedules, clinical agreements, and a list of clinical settings with their contact information.

Facilities and Resources:

- The DNI facilities are modern, spacious, and well-equipped.
- The nursing labs are furnished with high-fidelity simulation equipment and it appears that the simulation is directed by qualified faculty.

Subsequent Communications with the Program Directors:

- Board Staff have been in close communication with Directors of the VN and ADN programs since the April 26, 2011 survey visit and Board Staff requested documentation that the program is offering adequate faculty-supervised, direct-patient care clinical experiences to meet the program objectives.
- DNI VN and ADN program directors have been responsive to all requests from Board Staff, and have been diligent in their efforts to take corrective actions, and to come into compliance with Rules 214 and 215.
- Although substantial deficiencies in clinical experiences in both the VN and ADN programs were initially identified, DNI has since provided evidence of obtaining adequate clinical experiences for the ADN program.
- However, Board Staff continue to have serious concerns regarding the adequacy of quality, hands-on, direct-patient care experiences in the VN program.
- Though the VN program director has attested that efforts are being made to find additional clinical sites, the clinical schedules indicate students are spending many hours in campus-based clinical activities.
- Board Staff have learned that DNI intends to enroll 300 new vocational nursing students during October and November.

Pros:

- VN and ADN program directors have been responsive in providing documentation of efforts to obtain clinical experiences, including lists of clinical agencies as well as new clinical contracts.

Cons.:

- DNI has not provided evidence that they have secured adequate clinical experiences for the 1,016 students currently enrolled in the VN program.
- The 2010 NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate is 80.11% (286/357). DNI's NCLEX-PN® pass rates since 2005 have steadily declined.

| Year | Approval Status | NCLEX-PN® Pass Rate | Number of First-Time Candidates Passed/Total |
|------|-----------------|---------------------|--|
| 2010 | Full | 80.11% | 286/357 |
| 2009 | Full | 87.12% | 284/326 |
| 2008 | Full | 88.02% | 169/192 |
| 2007 | Full | 94.70% | 125/132 |
| 2006 | Full | 92.21% | 71/77 |
| 2005 | Full | 100% | 21/21 |

- The first cohort of ADN students completed in December 2010, and the 2011 NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate is 62.75% (32/51). The program will be required to write a Self-Study Report based upon the 2011 NCLEX-RN® pass rate.
- Board Staff continue to receive complaints from both VN and ADN students enrolled at DNI.

Staff Comment:

In consideration of the lack of adequate clinical settings and the fact that the program was more successful with the NCLEX pass rate when fewer students were graduating, Staff recommend setting limits on the enrollments. A suggestion is in the letter but Staff is open to Board's consideration.

Staff Recommendation:

Move to accept the survey visit to DNI on April 26, 2011, and issue the requirement to limit student enrollment.

Addendum to Report:

At the October 2011 Board meeting, members of the Board voted to issue the following requirement to both the Dallas Nursing Institute Vocational Nursing Education Program and Associate Degree Nursing Education Program:

Requirement:

Rule 214.8(a) and Rule 215.8(a) related to *Students* states that "The number of students admitted to the program shall be determined by the number of qualified faculty, adequate educational facilities and resources, and the availability of appropriate clinical learning experiences for students." **Therefore**, the program shall adjust the number of new students being admitted to the vocational nursing program to fifty (50) students per quarterly enrollment to ensure that there are available clinical learning experiences for all enrolled students. Student enrollment in the Associate Degree Nursing program shall be not more than fifty (50) students twice a year until the program is on full approval.

DRAFT LETTER

January 21, 2013

Gwendolyn Gaston, MSN, RN, Director
Associate Degree Nursing Education Program
Dallas Nursing Institute
12170 North Abrams Road, Suite 200
Dallas, Texas 75243

Dear Ms. Gaston:

At the January 17-18, 2013 meeting, the members of the Texas Board of Nursing (Board) discussed the approval status of the Dallas Nursing Institute Associate Degree Nursing Education Program based upon the NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate for 2011 and 2012, review of the 2012 NEPIS, and compliance with Board Rule 215. Members of the Board wish to thank you and <<INSERT AS NEEDED>> for being present at the meeting to answer questions.

Based upon the discussion and review of documents, it was the decision of the Board to change the approval status of the Dallas Nursing Institute Associate Degree Nursing Education Program from Initial to Initial with Warning and authorize a survey visit in Spring 2013. Board Staff will contact you to schedule the survey visit.

If you have any questions or if we may offer assistance, please contact Board Staff at (512)305-7660.

Sincerely,

Kathy Shipp, MSN, RN, FNP
President

Virginia D. Ayars, EdD, MS, RN
Nursing Consultant for Education

copy: Texas Workforce Commission
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools