

**An Analysis of Eight Self-Study Reports
Professional Nursing Education Programs
2017 NCLEX-RN® Examination Pass Rates**

Historical Perspective:

When a nursing education program's NCLEX examination pass rate is below 80% for a first time, the program is required to submit a Self-Study Report (SSR) that examines factors that may have affected the pass rate. Performance on the NCLEX examination is only one measure of a program's success but often indicates areas of needed improvement in the program. Through a self-analysis, the program self-identifies areas of weakness and develops corrective measures for program improvement in areas of student and faculty policies, curriculum, teaching strategies, clinical learning experiences, and program evaluation.

Following the changes in the passing standard for the NCLEX-RN® in 2013, the number of SSRs required of professional nursing education programs increased drastically but over a few years, programs have been able to self-correct by implementing measures to improve their performance and increase rigor in the programs. See data in the following table:

Examination Year	Number of Self-Study Reports Required for Professional Nursing Education Programs
2012	1
2013	30
2014	15
2015	16
2016	10
2017	8

Beginning in October 2014, Board Staff provided an analysis of findings in the SSRs at the October Board meetings for professional nursing education programs and at the January or April Board meetings for the vocational nursing education programs.

The eight professional nursing education programs required to submit SSRs during 2018 may be classified as:

- 2 career schools/colleges
- 3 community colleges
- 2 public universities
- 1 other (Excelsior College in Albany, New York* – required through HB 2950)

Another interesting factor is that four of the eight programs were on Initial Approval Status and two of the four on Initial Approval were approved to restart after previously closing their programs. Even though there is a fairly even split between types of programs, there is strong indication that newly approved programs are at higher risk for performance issues.

Findings from the SSRs written by the Texas-approved programs were consistent with past SSRs:

- Admission policies needed correction to ensure students were qualified.
- At-risk students should be identified and remediation provided.
- Readjustment of readmission policies needed.
- Faculty and student policies need to be followed and enforced.
- Faculty should be provided a strong orientation and ongoing faculty development.
- Curriculum should be reviewed regularly for currency, rigor, relevance.
- Evaluation methods (grading) for classroom and clinical should be reviewed and revised.
- The Total Evaluation Plan should be used regularly and changes documented.

*Excelsior College offers an LVN to ADN online curriculum based upon competency testing. It is approved in the State of New York but does not require faculty-supervised clinical learning experiences. Therefore, it has been the subject of legislative activity. Currently the graduates are eligible to take the NCLEX for a license in Texas, but HB 2950 placed Excelsior under requirements in Texas rules. Since their NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate for the Texas examination year was below 80%, Excelsior was required to submit a SSR. The Excelsior SSR described the program of study and pointed out the challenges of offering a program with open enrollment and great flexibility for students completing the program at their own pace. It also identified measures Excelsior has implemented over the past few years to improve student success.

This report is for information only. No Board action is required.