

Report on Communication Activities With Nursing Education Programs

This agenda item is reserved to report the formal communication activities of the Nursing Consultants for Education with Texas pre-licensure nursing education programs and stakeholders.

Participation in the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) Nursing Innovation Grant Program (NIGP) Webinar on November 18, 2020

Three Education Consultants (Janice Hooper, Virginia Ayars, Beverly Skloss) participated in a webinar that was under the direction of Fu-An Lin, PhD, Program Director, Academic Quality and Workforce Division at THECB, that was planned for the 45 professional nursing education programs who were recipients of grant awards. In July 2020, the Division released a Request for Applications (RFA) under the Nursing Innovation Grant Program (NIGP) entitled, *Supporting Clinical Learning Experiences to Mitigate Impediments due to COVID-19*. The RFA aimed to support initial RN licensure programs' use of evidence-based alternatives to hands-on practice with patients to alleviate the immediate challenges due to the diminished access to clinical facilities and possible long-term impacts on students' clinical learning experiences from the pandemic. The grant period for the new awards is approximately 24 months beginning upon contract execution in November 2020 and ending November 30, 2022.

During the four-hour webinar, Dr. Lin presented an overview of the grant contract terms and conditions, policies, and processes, and the timelines involved. Board Staff presented topics helpful to grant recipients to assure compliance with Rule 215 including regulations guiding clinical learning experiences, alternative clinical opportunities, simulation laboratories, and use of standard patients. Rule 227, *Pilot Programs for Innovative Applications to Vocational and Professional Nursing Education*, and the opportunity it offers for innovation in nursing education was also discussed for its importance when a program requires a rule waiver.

Professional nursing education will greatly benefit from the almost \$5,000,000 in total grant awards from NIGP.

Virtual Updates to the Texas Association of Vocational Nursing Educators (TAVNE)

Responding to a request from TAVNE leadership, Board Staff presented updates to directors and educators for Vocational Nursing Education Programs on December 3, 2020. The agenda included the following items:

- Welcome and Introduction, General Response to COVID-19 – Kathy Thomas
- Waivers in Place, Nursing Licensing Compact, Rules Update – Kristin Benton
- Status of the Differentiated Essentials Update – Jan Hooper
- Creative Solutions to Clinical Experiences – Beverly Skloss

- Virtual Survey Visits – Gayle Varnell
- NEPIS Updates, New Nursing Programs, NCLEX Time Line – Virginia Ayars
- ORBS and Budget – Mark Majek
- Questions & Answers

COVID-19 Webpage Resources for Education Programs

Throughout the pandemic the education team has provided information relevant to education programs frequently. In addition, information and resources have been posted on the agency [COVID-19 Education webpage](#) including videos, useful links, frequently asked questions and other helps.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

This is an informational report. No action is required.