Greetings from the Education Consultants

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Find, Reflect, Organize, & Generate news = FROG

The Texas Board of Nursing (BON) Education Consultants have prepared this newsletter for information purposes for programs. Please share with the nursing faculty in your school. The education consultants join you in working remotely as we are learning to adapt to the “Virtual World”.

The Texas Nurse Portal Has Launched!

The Texas Nurse Portal is a reality and is now a part of your world. All licensees will be able to create a profile and renew their license and we will be able to accept new applications by examination and endorsement.

https://www.bon.texas.gov/texasnurseportal/ has videos that are very helpful.

Thank you for your patience throughout the process. There are FAQs on the BON web page to help you learn how to use the Texas Nurse Portal.

The following links will provide you with detailed information about processes and what information can be filled out in the Nurse Portal.

New and Accepted Students: for Students
New and Accepted Student: for Schools
Licensure
Upcoming Events

2020 Quarterly Board Meetings

October 22-23, 2020
The October Board Meeting will be a Virtual Meeting
Agendas and minutes are available on the Board of Nursing website under the News heading.

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Education Guidelines
Education FAQs
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Education Guidelines Have Been Updated

Please review the newly revised Education Guidelines. We believe that you will find them easier to use and a good resource for you in the future.

Deans and Directors Virtual Orientation Session

There have been two Virtual Orientations this year. One on June 5, 2020, and another on September 10, 2020. They were both well attended. The online Orientation Session is three hours in length to give the most important information to be successful in the director role. The next Orientation Session will probably be in February 2021. Hopefully the Deans and Directors Orientation will return to a full-day workshop held in Austin.

Will My Program Have a Virtual Survey Visit This Year?

The last newsletter presented an article entitled “Will My Program Have a Survey Visit this Year”. Since then, many changes have occurred! Now the question is: Will my program have a Virtual Survey Visit this Year?

We recognize that programs are currently facing multiple challenges, including whether they will continue to teach online or in small face-to-face groups on campus. Further, how will programs secure clinical placements for new and returning students?

Since survey visits still need to be conducted, they will most likely be completed virtually. If your program was scheduled for a survey visit this year, your assigned nursing education consultant will contact you to provide detailed information about how to plan for the virtual survey visit. Basically, all activities that would have been completed in a routine survey visit will need to be accomplished virtually. The education consultants have observed that the Texas programs have adapted to the online teaching environment very quickly and we anticipate that the same will be true for the virtual survey visits. The goal for the virtual survey visit is to offer an opportunity for the program administrators, faculty, and students to share information with the education consultant. We are looking forward to this new adventure and feel confident the programs will successfully meet this challenge!
Collaboration with the Nursing Practice Consultants

The Nursing Department is comprised of the Education Team and the Practice Team. The practice consultants address multiple inquiries, via telephone or e-mail communication, about nursing practice submitted by a variety of stakeholders. At a recent Nursing Department meeting, the Education Consultants asked the Practice Consultants about current practice issues that could have implications for nursing education, as follow:

What questions have the Board received from practicing nurses that you think educators would want to know about?
Kristin Benton, DNP, RN, Director of Nursing

Mainly, there are three main topics we receive questions about from practicing nurses that will be important to graduating nurses:

1. Scope of Practice: The Board does not publish a list of skills or tasks, but encourages nurses to reflect on their formal education, experience, and the limits of their license. The Texas Board of Nursing Decision-Making Model (DMM) is provided to help nurses determine if a particular activity is within their scope of practice.
2. Nursing Peer Review: Texas is unique in that the Nursing Practice Act provides for both incident-based and safe harbor nursing peer review. Online resources include the Nursing Peer Review Evaluation of Practice breakdown (NPREP) resource and online courses on both Incident-Based and Safe Harbor Nursing Peer Review.
3. Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC): The NLC allows nursing practice across state lines, which is especially important with the increased need for telehealth and telemedicine services currently. Please refer to: https://www.ncsbn.org/nurse-licensure-compact.htm for more information about the NLC.

Should telehealth be a part of a nursing program curriculum and clinical? What issues should be considered?
Elise McDermott, MSN, RN, Lead Nursing Consultant for Practice

Providing telehealth care has become a part of nursing practice with the advent of a virtual world. Important issues that must be considered in nursing education are communicating effectively with patients, their families, and other members of the health care team; developing a therapeutic relationship through the virtual media; advocating for a patient in a distant setting; recognizing patient needs and responses to the nurse; accurate documentation of the assessment and plan of care. Compliance with regulations related to patient privacy and confidentiality will be a necessity in preparing nursing students for telehealth.

What advice would you offer nursing students from questions you have heard from practicing nurses?
Heather Franz, MSN, APRN, CNS-BC, Nursing Consultant for Practice

My advice to new graduates is to critically look at the job you are considering accepting. Make sure that you are going to receive an adequate orientation and training and will have access to experienced nurses who can guide you. As a new nurse, recognize your own limitations and know when to seek help, direction, and guidance.
If there were a set of core skills for which all nursing students should gain competence, what would they include?
Linda Laws, BSN, MSN, RN, Nursing Consultant for Practice

The highest priority is on patient safety. The duty of the nurse is to the patient and this duty supersedes any physician’s order or facility policy. Four basic concepts for students to remember are:
1. Patient safety
2. Member of the profession
3. Patient centered care
4. Member of the health care team

Nurses function within their defined scope of practice and in accordance with [Board Rule 217.11](#). The beauty of Board rule 217.11 is that it covers everything from patient safety to medication administration, documentation, continuing education, professional boundaries, infection control, and collaboration with other health care team members. Knowing this rule is essential.

New nurses are in a transitional period from student to professional. It would be wise to seek and receive direction, supervision, consultation, and collaboration from experienced nurses. Just as important is the fact that experienced nurses must be willing to teach, guide, and mentor the new nurses.

What types of clinicals are best for VN students considering their scope of practice and where they will work?
Alexandria Chamberlain, MSN, RN, Nursing Consultant for Practice

It is important for the dean/director of a VN program to remember the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nursing Process</th>
<th>RN (autonomous/independent role)</th>
<th>LVN (directed/supervised role)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>comprehensive</td>
<td>focused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnosis</td>
<td>makes nursing diagnosis</td>
<td>participates through data collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>develops plan of care</td>
<td>participates in development/ modification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>within RN scope</td>
<td>within LVN scope</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>evaluates</td>
<td>assists</td>
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*References: NPA 301.002(2)&(5) & Rule 217.11(2)&(3)*

**Board Rule 217.11(2)** clarifies that vocational nursing involves assisting in the determination of **predictable** healthcare needs of clients. It would be important to note that patients under the vocational nurses’ care must be considered to be stable patients with predictable conditions. The following areas of practice are examples:

- Long-term care: nursing homes, assisted living facilities, rehabilitation hospitals, home health, hospice, correctional settings
- Ambulatory care settings: physician’s offices, hospital outpatient departments, community health departments, behavioral health
- Acute care settings: medical-surgical units
Refresher Course or Reeducation . . . What is the Difference?

**Refresher Courses** are for individuals who were at one time licensed as an LVN or RN in the State of Texas. **Reeducation** is required for candidates who completed the requirements for graduation from a Texas Board of Nursing (Board) approved nursing education program but were never licensed.

Currently, there is a waiver in place during the Covid pandemic:

Prior to this waiver, Rule 217.9(f) required a nurse who has not practiced in Texas and whose license has been in inactive state for less than 4 years to complete a reactivation application form, pay a fee, and submit verification of 20 hours of Continuing Education (CE). The granted waiver now eliminates licensure reactivation fees and CE requirements for these applicants. This will help expedite reactivation of licenses during this time of great need to increase the nursing workforce.

Prior to this waiver, Section 217.9 (g) required a nurse whose license has been inactive for more than four years to complete an additional refresher course and jurisprudence exam, in addition to a reactivation fee and completion of CE. This waiver eliminates licensure reactivation fees, CE requirements, refresher course requirements, and the jurisprudence exam requirement. Employers who seek to employ nurses who have been out of practice for a significant period of time are encouraged to assess each nurse’s competency and offer orientation necessary to assure the nurse is competent to practice safely.

**Refresher Courses**

Refresher Courses are mandated for nurses who have not practiced nursing and who have failed to maintain a current license from any licensing authority for four or more years. Refresher Courses are designed to update knowledge of current nursing theory and clinical practice to ensure competence of nurses re-entering nursing practice.

According to **Board Rule 217.3 Temporary Authorization to Practice/Temporary Permit**, Section (b), “A nurse who has not practiced nursing for four or more years may be issued a temporary permit for the limited purpose of completing a refresher course, extensive orientation to the practice of professional or vocational nursing, whichever is applicable, or academic course.”

**Board Rule 217.6 Failure to Renew Licensure** provides rules for renewal of an expired nursing license in Texas. The process for renewal varies depending upon completion of the jurisprudence examination, evidence of completing the continuing education requirements, and lack of practice experience for four or more years since the date of license expiration. Applicants who have not practiced for four years or more are required to apply for a Six-Month Temporary Permit and complete a Nurse Refresher Course.

Inactive licensed nurses desiring to renew nursing licensure may complete a Nurse Refresher Course by enrolling in and successfully completing:

- A Nurse Refresher Course;
- An extensive orientation program; or
- An academic nursing course.

Each Nurse Refresher Course is comprised of the following three components:

- Didactic Content;
- Skills Lab instruction; and
- Supervised clinical learning experiences (minimum of 80 hours).

Although the Board does not formally approve Refresher Courses, Board rules mandate that a six-month temporary permit be obtained prior to an individual engaging in any clinical learning experiences. Board rules do set forth course content and the percentage of time to be assigned to each content area.
Reeducation

A candidate who exceeds the four-year time limit to successfully complete the NCLEX must complete a nursing education program before that individual is eligible to take or retake the nursing licensure examination in the State of Texas. A nursing education program with full approval may agree to provide individuals the option of completing a nursing program which meets these individuals’ needs.

Board Rule 217.2 Licensure by Examination for Graduates of Nursing Education Programs Within the United States, its Territories, or Possessions sets forth that an applicant who has not passed the NCLEX-PN or NCLEX-RN within four years from the date of completion of requirements for graduation must complete a Board approved nursing education program in order to take or retake the examination.

Education Guideline 3.12.7.a. Reeducation of Candidates Who Fail to be Licensed within Four Years of Graduation establishes the process for nursing administrators and faculty of a nursing education program to consider when deciding to offer the option of reeducation. The essential elements presented in the guideline include: criteria for admission; assessment strategies to determine a student’s needs for nursing courses and non-nursing courses; methods for addressing the individual learner’s needs; and strategies for evaluation of the learner’s achievement.

The criteria for successful completion of a nursing education program should demonstrate that the individual has the knowledge, skills, and clinical behaviors/judgment that are comparable to those required of other students who complete the requirements of the nursing education program.

The nursing education program, not the Board, determines whether to offer the option of reeducation to individuals. The NCLEX outcome (pass/not pass) of the candidate will be used to calculate the examination year pass rate of the nursing education program.

The NEPIS is coming! The NEPIS is coming!

The purpose of the Nursing Education Program Information Survey (NEPIS) is to collect data on the supply of nursing students and faculty in Texas. The data will assist the Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies, the Texas Board of Nursing, and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, as well as other state organizations and the legislature, in projecting the future workforce needs of nursing education programs in the state.

The 2020 VN-NEPIS, 2020 RN-NEPIS, and 2020 Graduate-NEPIS will be available online on Monday, October 5th! Preliminary materials were distributed via e-mail communication in mid-September to all program deans and directors. Please utilize the provided worksheets to gather and organize information before electronic data entry. The online survey will be active from October 5, 2020, through October 16, 2020.

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