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Ohio Nursing Acceleration Program

**Good Afternoon Everyone:**

**The Governor's Jobs Cabinet recently drafted the attached "Ohio Nursing Acceleration Program," a new proposed state initiative through the Ohio Department of Development to address Ohio's critical nursing shortage.**

**The Ohio Nursing Acceleration Program currently incorporates four key elements as an approach to identify and address Ohio's critical nursing shortage. It's our understanding that funding will be forthcoming to support this initiative. The four key elements described in the attachment are:**

- 1) Increase the Number of Faculty for Nursing Programs**
- 2) Increase the Amount of Loans for Students Studying to be Faculty**
- 3) Increased Access to Clinical Training**
- 4) Adding Preceptors**

**Recognizing the importance and high profile of this new initiative, we are seeking YOUR practical suggestions and insights into how this initiative can be changed and/or improved, perhaps with the addition of other elements recommended for inclusion in this initiative.**

**Thank you for reviewing the attachment and giving us your feedback by next Thursday, February 10th. A report of the suggestions, comments and recommendations we gathered from you will be prepared for the next Job's Cabinet meeting.**

**By working together, we have the opportunity to be a part of the solution for addressing and solving Ohio's critical nursing shortage.**

**If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to ask. We welcome your returned comments by email, fax or snail mail by February 10th.**

**May you have a pleasant afternoon and continue to THINK SPRING !!!**



Ohio Nursing-Developmental Draft Only

## **Ohio Nursing Acceleration Program**

**Problem** – The Ohio Board of Nursing has estimated that unless access to degreed nursing programs change, Ohio will have a shortage of 13,000 registered nurses (RN) by 2015. This estimate is supported by the current shortage of registered nurses combined with the aging of the population that will increase clinical demand. Additionally, an estimated 40 percent of registered nurses will retire within 10 years. Since 60 percent of RNs work at hospitals and RNs make up 30 percent of the hospital workforce, this shortage can create a serious problem in the quality of care given to Ohioans.

Over the last eighteen months, the Ohio Health Care Workforce Advisory Council has been examining the causes of workforce shortages across the health industry and identified that the nursing shortage is caused by a shortage of faculty and a lack of capacity for experience gained through clinical sites.

**Solution** – Create additional faculty positions, increase opportunities for clinical experience, and provide additional loan funds to graduate nursing students, training an additional 800 nurses annually. This would increase the number of licensed RNs by 15 percent annually.

**Funding** – WIA discretionary funds are currently allocated through 2006. The Ohio Board of Regents has no current funds to allocate to expanding a select study program. The Board of Nursing has placed a fee on all license renewals for education purposes but finds the amount small to create major impact. Individual schools note high start-up costs to add additional students. Health Care is a growing, high technology employment sector with licensed nurses supplying the basic professional staffing requirements. Recommend consideration for the Third Frontier Bond Fund.

**Program Summary** – The shortage of RNs is a multi-faceted problem. Consequently the solution must be multi-pronged if it is to succeed. The total cost of the programs outlined below is estimated at \$50 million over a five-year period.

### **1) Increase the Number of Faculty for Nursing Programs**

Supplying additional funding for faculty positions is the first step to building capacity for Ohio's nursing schools. Current estimates suggest that nursing faculty positions cost an average of \$90,000 (\$65,000 salary and \$25,000 benefits/expenses). Using the clinical standard of 1 faculty per 8 students, Ohio nursing programs will need to hire an additional 100 faculty to graduate an additional 800 nurses annually. At a shared cost of \$50,000 per faculty member for the five years the total cost of this program would be \$25 million over five years. Annual shared funding would increase the faculty needed to expand enrollment in the licensed nursing programs. In addition the funds will help the nursing programs raise the wage rates to be more comparable to the wages available in clinical or private office settings.

### **2) Increase the Amount of Loans for Students Studying to be Faculty**

Adding nursing faculty will require a larger number of graduate level nursing candidates. To ensure that nursing school is an affordable option for nurses considering graduate education, expanding loan opportunities for students should be considered. The Ohio Board of Regents administers a Nurse Education Assistance

Loan Program that allows for up to \$3,000 annually in loan forgiveness to nursing students. Funds are currently generated from a \$5 fee charged from nurse licensing. By expanding this program to allow students seeking graduate degrees to receive a forgivable loan of up to \$10,000 per year (with no more than \$20,000 going to any one student over their course of study), 50 more graduate students annually could become faculty for an Ohio nursing program. Graduate retention in Ohio is ensured since the program is conditioned upon becoming faculty for an Ohio nursing school. Total costs of \$2.5 million would increase the number of new faculty members teaching nursing programs by 250 over five years (50 per year). Changing this program to focus on graduate students would require changing the rules governing the program.

**3) Increased Access to Clinical Training**

Critical to the Nursing student experience is the clinical, hands-on experience. With more students in class, there will be the need for additional clinical sites for training. This proposal would provide a series of grants to regional healthcare partnerships between education and health care facilities to develop alternative methods for students to obtain clinical experience. Examples of alternative methods include: simulated mannequins, shadowing an elderly patient while in training, transportable equipment that can be shared throughout a community, experience gained through blood banks, doctor’s offices, etc. This process would be run on a competitive RFP basis to select the partnerships that demonstrate creative ways for providing clinical training and support state requirements for licensing. At a cost of \$4 million annually this could benefit 20 clinical facilities at an average cost per facility of \$200,000 per year. Over the five-year period the potential exists to impact virtually all 107 nursing programs throughout the state for a total cost of \$20 million.

**4) Adding Preceptors**

Another area of opportunity that needs to be addressed to handle increased flow of nursing students through the system is to increase the number of preceptors. Preceptors are current nurses that dedicate a portion of their time to mentor nursing students through on-the-job training at the hospital. Preceptors frequently maintain all of their regular job duties and are only able to mentor one or two students at a time. The opportunity exists to provide incentives that encourage more RNs to become preceptors and thus increase the capacity for clinical training. A rough estimate of \$2.5 million over 5 years is an option for structuring an incentive. However, this idea needs more work to determine the most appropriate way of increasing the number of preceptors in the system.

<u>Program Component</u>	<u>Program Cost</u>
Increasing the Number of Nursing Faculty	\$25 million
Nurse Education Assistance Loan Program Expansion	\$2.5 million
Increasing Access to Clinical Training	\$20 million
Adding Preceptors to Increase Clinical Capacity	\$2.5 million

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**Total Costs**

**\$50 million**