



Statewide Strategic Plan for Nursing Workforce in Florida

Progress Report

October 2005

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Florida Center for Nursing Board of Directors and Staff recognize that to accomplish the goals of the *Statewide Strategic Plan for Nursing Workforce in Florida* elected officials, state agency staff, and nursing leaders throughout the state must participate in strategy development and implementation. We wish to acknowledge and thank Governor Jeb Bush and all who have actively participated in this process which includes, but is not limited to representatives of the following:

- Florida House of Representatives
- Florida Senate
- Florida Association of Colleges of Nursing
- Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation
- Florida Board of Nursing
- Florida Council of Nursing Education Administrators
- Florida Department of Education
- Florida Hospital Association
- Florida League for Nursing
- Florida Nurses Association
- Florida Organization of Nurse Executives
- Workforce Florida, Inc.

REQUEST FOR INPUT

Assessment of the *Statewide Strategic Plan for Nursing Workforce in Florida* will be ongoing. Please provide the Center with information related to activities you or your organization are initiating or have already begun that will contribute to achievement of the goals described in this document. Submissions may be sent to the addresses below and should include your contact information. Thank you.

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- Orlando, FL 32816-3224
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TO OBTAIN COPIES

The October 2005 Strategic Plan Progress Report may be obtained from the Center's website at <http://www.FLCenterForNursing.org>.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Statewide Strategic Plan for Nursing Workforce in Florida*, published May 2004, was written through collaboration with 12 professional organizations and state agencies. Its purpose is to serve as a guide for initiatives to address the critical nursing shortage and to provide a basis for evaluation of progress. This document serves as a one-year assessment of progress in addressing the nursing shortage in Florida.

Goals 1 and 2 are focused on developing a supply and demand model that forecasts changes and gives direction for systemic changes to alleviate the nursing shortage in Florida. Such a model is dependent upon reliable and recurrent data. As such the two goals are addressed as one. Issues driving the goals are sources and quality of nursing data/information, absence of required nurse workforce data, population and regional demographics, and growth projections. Center activities already completed or in progress to achieve the goals include publication of in-depth reports addressing workforce data and forecasting, completion of Florida RN survey, and collaboration with other state agencies.

To achieve Goals 1 and 2 the following activities are recommended:

1. Mandatory collection of key supply and demand data elements on a recurrent basis.
2. Collection of significant data related to nursing education and nurse graduates.
3. Collection of significant data related to the demand for nurses.
4. Operation of an expanded forecasting model.
5. Provision of recurrent funding for data collection and analysis.

Goal 3 is intended to disseminate information on effective strategies that support recruitment and retention methods, such as those activities built upon best practices and organizational models that enable nurses to practice good patient care. For the Center, Goal 3 involves dissemination of information. For employers, Goal 3 means implementing changes to achieve a positive work environment. For educators, Goal 3 suggests identifying methods to recruit qualified applicants who understand the demands of nursing. Issues driving the goal are a general lack of understanding as to what nursing is and what nurses do, the need to recruit diverse populations into the profession, negative work environments that contribute to increased turnover and vacancy rates, the aging workforce, and inadequate use of available technology. Center activities already completed or in progress to achieve the goals include establishment of a Recruitment & Retention page on the FCN website and plans for regional and/or local efforts to facilitate new and enhance existing coalitions working to address the nursing shortage. Activities by other state professional groups include a collaborative effort known as Improving Care through the Advancement of Nursing, statewide conferences with presentations addressing characteristics of healthy work environments and innovative care delivery models, and production of a brochure *Understanding the Nursing Profession in Florida*.

To achieve Goal 3 the following activities are recommended:

1. Communicate and implement methods to improve the work environment with emphasis on patient and staff safety and quality patient care.
2. Implement recruitment strategies with counselors designated to provide nursing-specific advice to interested students.

3. Disseminate information about nurse career-ladder articulation programs for nurses.

The intent of **Goal 4** is to identify ways to support a nursing educational system in Florida that facilitates career enhancement, targets enrollments at all levels of nursing education to reflect industry needs and the diversity of the state, produces graduates who have the knowledge and skills to provide quality care, and is funded to meet the needs for all levels of graduates. Issues driving the goal include inadequate supply of qualified nurse faculty, inadequate clinical sites and faculty, education funding, program completion, and graduate licensure. Progress has been demonstrated through activities such as Center completion of a survey of nursing education programs in Florida, State of Florida incentive programs, grants awarded through the 2005 SUCCEED, FL Nursing Education Grant Program, and the wide range of innovative education models and progression programs in place throughout the state.

To achieve Goal 4 the following activities are recommended:

1. Utilize a regional and/or local approach to strategically address planning.
2. Address faculty salary disparities.
3. Enact state legislation to address the faculty shortage.
4. As appropriate to regional/local issues select strategies to alleviate the shortage of qualified faculty.
5. Address the issue of inadequate clinical capacity.
6. Address issues of program completion and improve national examination scores.

Goal 5 relates to the sustained existence of the Florida Center for Nursing so that it continues to address issues of supply and demand for nursing. The dominant issue driving the need for this goal is the critical nature of the nursing shortage. The healthcare needs of the citizens of Florida cannot be met without an adequate nurse workforce. To address its statutory mandate the FCN must be expanded and collaboration among nursing organizations is imperative. The Center has been funded through state budget allocation annually. In 2002 the FCN Trust Fund was established to receive voluntary contributions from ARNPs, RNs, and LPNs as a part of the license application and renewal process. With collaboration of the Florida Nurses Association, the Florida Board of Nursing, and elected leaders, the FCN supports legislation to authorize the transfer of \$5.00 per license application and renewal to the FCN trust fund within the existing fee structure.

Other recommended activities to accomplish this goal are:

1. Maintain a permanent state-supported structure.
2. Explore alternative funding options.
3. Increase funding allocation for FCN operations.
4. Solicit donations to support projects and enhance operations.

There has been progress in addressing the nursing shortage in Florida. This review found evidence of activities by elected leadership, state agencies, and professional groups. However, though the process to achieve the goals is in place, it is apparent that original evaluation target dates for activities such as an operational forecast model will not be met. Continued commitment on the part of key stakeholders is essential for success. A biennial review of progress will facilitate the necessary strategic approach and aide in identification of priorities.

Statewide Strategic Plan for Nursing Workforce in Florida Progress Report as of October 2005

The *Statewide Strategic Plan for Nursing Workforce in Florida*, published May 2004, was written through collaboration with 12 professional organizations and state agencies. Its purpose is to serve as a guide for initiatives to address the critical nursing shortage and to provide a basis for evaluation of progress. Though the Center authored the plan it is intended for use by all entities concerned with resolving the shortage. A full report including background information and rationale for the identified goals was published in November 2004 and is available on the Center's website. This document serves as a one-year assessment of progress in addressing the nursing shortage in Florida. The format for the assessment is the Strategic Plan and its five goals. Included is a statement of the issues driving the goals, a summary of activities that have been initiated, and identification of recommended activities.

GOAL 1: An ongoing statewide system forecasts the changing nurse workforce supply and demand in Florida.

GOAL 2: Systemic changes and the allocation of new and existing resources have occurred in response to the results of the forecasting system described in Goal 1 that positively affect the ability of nursing supply to meet nursing demand.

Goals 1 and 2 are focused on developing a supply and demand model that forecasts changes and gives direction for systemic changes to alleviate the nursing shortage in Florida. Such a model is dependent upon reliable and recurrent data. As such the two goals are addressed as one.

ISSUES DRIVING THE GOALS

Sources of Data

Current nursing supply and demand data sources are inadequate for strategic manpower planning. Specifically, data elements such as employer type and location (e.g., hospital, academia), employment status (e.g., full or part time), registered nurse (RN) education levels (e.g., highest degree earned) or nursing specialty (e.g., pediatrics, surgery) are not collected in a method that can be effectively utilized for planning purposes. Issues of public vs. proprietary data result in some organizations that collect data agreeing to share reports, but not the raw data.

Quality of Data

Nursing supply and demand data sources use varying definitions of data elements which will require standardization for data integration by the Center. Three critical concerns with using a variety of data sources are consistency of data element definitions across databases, data reliability, and generalizability. State organizations and agencies focus data collection relative to their particular mission, thus supply and demand data is segregated. Current supply data does not provide accurate information on the age of the nursing population and cannot account for impending retirements. The number of licensed active RNs is misleading as not all licensed RNs are practicing in health care or providing direct patient care.

Absence of Data

Most of the required data elements are not currently collected to accurately define the supply of and demand for nurses at the state and regional level and in all employment settings. Without the necessary information, a forecasting model cannot effectively facilitate strategic decision making in allocation of resources and evaluation of results. One example of an omission is the absence of a mechanism to identify and track the volume of traveler/agency or foreign educated nurses working in Florida. Additionally, academic information from the Department of Education, such as highest degree obtained, will only reflect students attending programs within Florida.

Population and Regional Demographics

There is a need for a regional focus in addition to statewide as surveys demonstrate variances in issues contributing to the shortage by region of the state. Following are examples of how the demand for nurses is impacted by demographics.

- Florida population: growth and health needs.
- Student population: access to education and successful program completion.
- Nursing population: age of members and work culture.
- Diversity in all populations.

Growth Projections

Current employment growth projections utilize staffing need based on historical trend analysis of employed RNs and licensed practical nurses (LPN) and adjust for population growth. There are two significant flaws in this approach. One is that the existing RN/LPN employment represents only those working and does not consider vacancies or desired staffing. The other is the use of straight population growth without consideration of health demands. This is significant in Florida with an aging and highly diverse population. The result is an under estimation of employment needs.

ACTIVITIES TO DATE

Reports Published by FCN

Members of the Center's Board of Directors and Staff have published four in-depth reports addressing workforce data which can be accessed from the FCN website (www.FLCenterForNursing.org). Areas addressed include analysis of Florida nurse licensure data, synthesis and evaluation of existing Florida data, and compilation of available state and national data. Dr. Lynn Unruh, Nurse Economist published a report on Nursing Workforce Forecasting in the State of Florida outlining what is needed to implement a forecasting model that incorporates the ability to conduct workforce simulations. Issue briefs and white papers have been published on RN & LPN employment projections and the nurse faculty shortage. Summaries of national reports available from the Center's website include Health Resources and Services Administration publications *State Health Workforce Profile for Florida* and *Supply, Demand, and Use of Licensed Practical Nurses*.

Survey of Licensed RNs in Florida

In an effort to add to the body of nurse supply data, the Center conducted a voluntary survey as a component of the RN license renewal process. Though an analysis of results is available, the value of the information gained is limited by the low response rate of 4.1%.

Collaboration with State Agencies

Center staff, with the support of a nurse economist consultant, is collaborating with state agency representatives from the Department of Health (Board of Nursing), Agency for Workforce Innovation (Labor Market Statistics), Department of Education (FETPIP data), and Workforce Florida, Incorporated to accomplish the following:

1. Clarify what nursing workforce data exists in Florida;
2. Identify how essential data elements currently not collected can be obtained;
3. Write a comprehensive plan to implement a nurse supply and demand forecasting model; and
4. Identify the associated costs and potential sources of funding.

RECOMMENDED ACTIVITIES

1. Mandatory collection of key supply and demand data elements on a recurrent basis.
Approve language authorizing the collection of workforce data by the Florida BON as a component of licensure application and renewal, said data to be analyzed and results reported by the Florida Center for Nursing. Required data elements should be identified through a collaborative effort facilitated by the Center with representation from, at least, the Board of Nursing, Agency for Workforce Innovation, nursing education, professional nursing organizations, and nursing employers. Data collection, analysis, and reporting should reflect statewide and regional perspectives.
2. Collect significant data related to nursing education and nurse graduates.
The Department of Education and Board of Nursing should complete comprehensive data and information collection regarding nursing student applications, admissions, retention and graduation.
3. Collect significant data related to the demand for nurses.
The Center should facilitate a collaborative effort with representation from, at least, the Agency for Health Care Administration, Workforce Florida, Incorporated, and the Agency for Workforce Innovation, professional nursing and health care organizations, and nurse employers to define nursing demand data elements and identify a mechanism to collect nursing demand data.
4. An expanded forecasting model needs to be operational.
The Center should be funded to continue work with Dr. Lynn Unruh, Nurse Economist to implement a comprehensive forecasting model that predicts the changing nurse workforce supply and demand in Florida for all levels of nursing.
5. Provide recurrent funding for data collection and analysis.
For successful implementation of an effective forecasting model and effective planning it is essential that there be recurring funding for agencies collecting data and for the Center as the central source for data integration and analysis, including a FCN research position. Whenever possible, data elements should be defined to meet standardized national definitions and formulas.

GOAL 3: Information has been disseminated on effective strategies and best practices related to work cultures and environments that support recruitment and retention of nurses.

The intent of Goal 3 is to disseminate information on effective strategies that support recruitment and retention methods, such as those activities built upon best practices and organizational models that enable nurses to practice good patient care. Achievement of Goal 3 is dependent on adoption and utilization of methods to assess reported recruitment and retention methods, such that their distribution fosters positive changes in nursing work environments and organizational cultures. For the Center, Goal 3 involves dissemination of information. For employers, Goal 3 means implementing changes to achieve a positive work environment. For educators, Goal 3 suggests identifying methods to recruit qualified applicants who understand the demands of nursing.

ISSUES DRIVING THE GOAL

Understanding What Nursing Is

There exists a general lack of understanding as to what nursing is and what nurses do as demonstrated by the following.

- Increased attrition from education programs due to student entry to programs without knowledge of expectations.
- Increased turnover rates and loss of nurses from the workforce due to poor understanding of role.
- Belief that there is a “quick” fix to alleviate the shortage due to undervaluing nursing contributions to health care delivery.
- Challenge to lower the established required faculty qualifications and faculty to student ratios due to lack of understanding the unique characteristics of nursing education.

Recruitment of Nurses

Recruitment into the profession, at present, is not an issue. There are qualified applicants turned away from each nursing education program in the state. However, there continues to be a need to recruit diverse populations into the profession. The state’s reliance on in-migration of nurses as a means of increasing supply is a concern as well as the increasing competitive opportunities of employers other than for direct health care delivery (e.g., case management and pharmaceutical industry).

Retention of Nurses: The Work Environment

The increased complexities of the health care environment and technical advances have resulted in changing role expectations of nurses including:

- Assessing complex healthcare needs,
- Designing, implementing, evaluating and reformulating patient care plans,
- Operating technologically advanced equipment,
- Performing intricate and complex procedures,
- Educating patients, and
- Making critical judgments about patients’ health care needs.

A negative work environment contributes to increased turnover and vacancy rates. Contributing factors include:

- Lack of autonomy and self-governance.
- Relationships with colleagues including the subservient image of nursing and physician – nurse relationships.
- Long hours; mandatory overtime; shift work (nights/weekends).
- Chronic understaffing.
- Inability to perform role as educated and perceived ought to be performed.
- Physically demanding work.
- Emotionally stressful work.
- High use of temporary/agency staff.
- Inadequate attention to distribution of staff by experience level and/or educational preparation.
- Increasing use of staff prepared at lower education level and/or unlicensed assistive personnel.
- Absence of flexible scheduling.

Other issues contributing to retention of nurses include the aging workforce and inadequate use of available technology to enhance the work environment (e.g., patient lift equipment and paperless medical record with handheld equipment for data entry).

ACTIVITIES TO DATE

The Center's website provides a vast source of information on the work of the center and the nursing shortage. A Recruitment & Retention page was developed to promote and disseminate information on best practices and innovative strategies from across the state and nationally. From this page one can access internet links pertaining to nurse recruitment and retention.

The Center is implementing a plan for regional and/or local efforts to facilitate new and enhance existing coalitions working to address the nursing shortage. Participants of each consortium would include representation from community college and university nursing programs (state and private) and health industry employers. Objectives of summits to be held with regional and/or local representatives will be to:

- Provide a forum for knowledge sharing,
- Discuss the regional status of nursing,
- Foster partnerships,
- Identify priority issues,
- Develop strategies for systemic change, and
- Promote sharing of best practices and innovative strategy initiatives for nurse recruitment and retention.

A collaborative effort of the Florida Hospital Association, Florida Organization of Nurse Executives, and Florida Nurses Association – Improving Care through the Advancement of

Nursing was initiated in July 2005. The focus of the program is the impact of best practices on patient safety and the nursing shortage. Identified best practices will be presented at a symposium to be held November 16, 2005.

The Florida Organization of Nurse Executives (FONE) holds biannual statewide conferences with presentations addressing characteristics of healthy work environments and innovative care delivery models. Additionally, regional best practice conferences are held with the best of the best showcased at the annual fall conference. The FONE Research Committee completed a Delphi study to randomly survey FONE membership regarding staffing and work environment issues. Individual membership facilities participate in regional efforts, local school career days, offer tuition reimbursement for staff, offer nursing scholarships, and provide faculty for nursing education programs.

The Florida Nurses Association (FNA) produced the brochure *Understanding the Nursing Profession in Florida* through collaboration with the FCN, the Florida Council of Nursing Education Administrators (community college programs), and the Florida Association of Colleges of Nursing (university programs). The brochure is intended to serve as a quick reference on the levels of education and practice of nursing personnel who are licensed or regulated by the Florida Board of Nursing. Copies of the brochure may be obtained by contacting the FNA.

At its September 2005 Convention the FNA House of Delegates passed a motion to develop and implement a nursing image campaign.

RECOMMENDED ACTIVITIES

1. Activities to improve the work environment with emphasis on patient and staff safety and quality patient care must be implemented and may include:
 - Promotion of known characteristics of a positive work environment (e.g., Essentials of Magnetism).
 - Development and offer of attractive employment packages including flexible schedules, child and adult care facilities, tuition reimbursement programs, continuing education programs, health benefits, and competitive salaries.
 - Promotion of nurse internships as transition into professional employment.
 - Implementation of new & improved technologies, particularly information systems.
 - Realignment of the work, work schedules, and compensation structures of nurses with an eye toward the skill, experience, and capacity of the maturing nurse.
 - Removal of non-nursing functions from the RNs clinical workload.
 - Strengthening nursing leadership and management at all levels of health organizations.
2. Recruitment strategies should be implemented and may include training for high school and college-level guidance counselors in the requirement of nursing education programs, with counselors designated to provide nursing-specific advice to interested students.

3. Dissemination of public information about nurse career-ladder articulation programs for nurses. Hospitals and other nursing employers should be encouraged to consider tuition reimbursement programs to promote the pursuit of LPN-RN, RN-BSN, BSN-MSN or PhD degrees.

GOAL 4: The Florida nursing educational system

- facilitates career enhancement,
- targets enrollments at all levels of nursing education that reflect industry needs and the diversity of the state,
- produces graduates who have the knowledge and skills to provide quality care, and
- is funded to meet industry needs for all levels of new graduates.

ISSUES DRIVING THE GOAL

Community colleges and universities agree that recruitment of qualified faculty, availability of clinical spaces and clinical preceptors, and inadequate recurring financial resources are barriers to program expansion. As a result, there is inadequate capacity for the nursing education system to admit qualified applicants. Ideally, increasing the number of nursing programs would increase access for prospective nursing students. However, this compounds the problems of faculty shortages and available clinical sites.

Inadequate supply of qualified nurse faculty

Results of the FCN survey conducted in January 2005 identified reasons for faculty resignations as retirement, career advancement opportunities, salary issues, and desire to return to clinical practice. It is well documented that faculty salaries are not competitive with private industry. The aging of the nursing population is most evident among faculty resulting in increased retirements. The faculty shortage has resulted in delays in recruitment to fill vacancies (commonly takes up to 6 months and can take more than 2 years).

Inadequate clinical sites and faculty

Nursing practice and education are based on a foundation of clinical experience. It is essential that qualified faculty is available in numbers required by the licensing board and accrediting bodies to oversee student clinical experiences. The shortage of registered nurses in the workforce compounds the ability of practicing nurses to facilitate student clinical experiences. Placing the additional burden of students on direct care nurses can have a negative effect on job satisfaction and the nurses' ability to deliver safe, quality care to patients. The inability of the Board of Nursing to base program expansion and/or new program approval on clinical site and facility availability compounds an already existing problem.

Education Funding Issues

Funding issues include inadequate recurring funding for program needs, inconsistent direction of funding to nursing programs, and the fact that nursing education programs are expensive to operate.

Program completion and licensure

It is critical that attrition from nursing education programs be reduced. Frequently, middle and high school students are not adequately prepared in math and science courses to succeed in health science programs of study. This can contribute to failures and increased drop-out rates. Post-graduation nurses must successfully pass the NCLEX, national licensure examination. First-time candidates educated in Florida pass rates on the national licensure exam have been and continue to be below national averages: FL=83.3% US=86.6%¹. The result is a poor investment of education funding and absence of benefit to nursing supply.

ACTIVITIES TO DATE

The Center completed a survey of nursing education programs in Florida. The full report, published in January, 2005, is available on the FCN website. The Board of Nursing has incorporated the Center's questions into its annual survey of nursing programs to begin in the Fall 2005.

The State of Florida offers two incentive programs: Nursing Scholarship Program and Student Loan Forgiveness Program.

Sixteen grants were awarded by the FL Department of Education through the 2005 SUCCEED, FL Nursing Education Grant Program with \$10 million in non-recurring state funds. The purpose of the grant program is to increase the capacity of nursing programs approved by the Board of Nursing at public and private postsecondary educational institutions to produce more nurses to enter the workforce in Florida. Funds must be used to support new students and not to supplant current funding or students. Institutions applying for funds shall not reduce funding or the current level of enrollment in existing programs.

Members of the Florida Association of Colleges of Nursing (FACN) are actively engaged in discussions with the Board of Nursing regarding the proliferation of nursing programs in the state and competition for clinical spaces. They are sharing information on innovative models for nursing education across the state, recognizing that what is appropriate for one region may not be successful in another. Seven schools in Florida are participating in the Clinical Nurse Leader pilot program with the American Association of Colleges of Nursing. The FACN schools participated in the state university budget proposal for 2006-7 whereby a coordinated response was prepared to meet statewide professional and workforce needs for nurses.

Licensed Practical Nursing programs are implementing progression programs to facilitate those individuals completing Patient Care Technician programs entering LPN programs. A wide range of progression programs are in place throughout the state to ease transitions from CNA to LPN, LPN to RN, RN to MSN, and so on.

¹ Florida Board of Nursing NCLEX Passing Rates for Registered Nurses published October 18, 2004.

RECOMMENDED ACTIVITIES

1. Utilize a regional and/or local approach to strategically address planning.
 Develop regional consortiums of nursing education programs to share critical faculty (e.g., clinical specialties) and advanced technology (e.g., simulation equipment; distance learning). Develop a program of shared use of simulation technology to substitute and/or enhance clinical learning. The “shared use” concept would decrease cost of purchase by colleges and universities located in reasonably close proximity through joint purchase equipment.

2. Address faculty salary disparities.
 Complete an assessment of nurse faculty salaries as compared to earning capacity in clinical practice settings and as compared to comparable faculty in other disciplines. With resulting information adjust nursing faculty salaries to market competitive levels.

3. Enact state legislation to address the faculty shortage.
 - Fund scholarship and incentive programs to encourage pursuit of graduate nursing degrees that prepare individuals to become faculty at universities and community colleges. Provide a stipend to supplement lost salary if employed full-time. Require Florida work commitment as component of program.
 - Eliminate practice restrictions on advanced practice nurses so that Florida is consistent with other states’ scope of practice. With the goal of increasing the supply of nurse educators, this would facilitate recruitment and encourage entry into graduate education programs.
 - Sustain the funded grants programs, such as SUCCEED, FL, for increased production of masters and doctorally prepared nurse educators and increased graduation of new registered nurses.
 - Provide incentives for colleges and universities to prioritize nursing education. Such incentives may include changing the funding formula language to recognize the significance of contact hours as opposed to credit hours in clinical practice programs.
 - Establish a source of targeted recurring funding to provide the universities and community colleges with the fiscal stability needed to plan for long-term expansion of nursing programs.

4. As appropriate to region/local issues select from below strategies to alleviate the shortage of qualified faculty.
 - Develop incentive program for joint appointments including employer approved leaves of absence to serve as faculty.
 - Develop incentive programs for completion of advanced education including employer approved leaves of absence.
 - Support the training and preparation of hospital nurse clinicians to become adjunct/part-time faculty in schools of nursing by encouraging health care facilities to work collaboratively with colleges and universities to develop innovative cost-sharing strategies for part-time faculty salaries.

5. Address the issue of inadequate clinical capacity.
 - Grant the Florida Board of Nursing the authority to decline applications to establish new nursing education programs unless an absence of competition for clinical sites with registered nurse programs can be verified.
 - Recruit nursing professionals at or near retirement, including military retirees, and provide incentives to serve as clinical faculty.
 - Work with clinical facilities, in collaboration with local/regional nursing education programs, to identify and make available more clinical training sites for nursing education.

6. Address issues of program completion and improve national examination scores.
 - Increase accessibility through alternative methods of program delivery.
 - Support the needs of minority students to maximize successful program completion (e.g., funding for remedial language or other content).
 - Implement interventions to improve and sustain Florida NCLEX pass rates at or above the national mean through collaboration of the Florida Board of Nursing, the Florida Association of Colleges of Nursing, and the Florida Council of Nursing Education Administrators.

GOAL 5: The Florida Center for Nursing continues to address issues of supply and demand for nursing, including issues of recruitment, retention, and utilization of nurse workforce resources as described in Florida Statute 464.0195.

The Center Board of Director's is grateful to Florida's Governor and Legislators for their support but recognizes the need to secure other funding sources.

ISSUES DRIVING THE GOAL

The healthcare needs of the citizens of Florida cannot be met without an adequate nurse workforce. Although several state and national organizations collect data, the databases for Florida are limited and incomplete. The total population in Florida is projected to grow 22% between 2000 and 2020, while the population 65 and over is projected to grow 63% during the same period.²

The Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation (FAWI) projects annual openings of 8,060 RN and 2,305 LPN positions each year through 2011. RNs now top the list of the 10 occupations with the largest projected numerical growth. More new positions are expected to be created for RNs than for any other occupation.

To address its statutory mandate the FCN must be expanded and collaboration among nursing organizations is imperative. Current funding levels for Center operation are inadequate to

² Health Resources and Services Administration. (2004). State health workforce profiles: Florida. Retrieved October 19, 2005 from <http://bhpr.hrsa.gov/healthworkforce/reports/profiles>.

implement programs, seek external funding, respond to requests, or promote nursing in the state of Florida.

ACTIVITIES TO DATE

The FCN has been funded through state budget allocation annually since its inception with a current amount of \$250,000.

In 2002 the FCN Trust Fund was established to receive voluntary contributions from ARNPs, RNs, and LPNs as a part of the license application and renewal process. Though \$77,000 was contributed by the December 2004, only an additional \$7,000 has been contributed since. Approximately \$66,000 has been expended for data collection, consultation, and operations leaving an approximate balance of \$18,000.

Through collaboration with the Florida Nurses Association, the Florida Board of Nursing, and elected leaders, the FCN supports legislation to authorize the transfer of \$5.00 per license application and renewal to the FCN trust fund within the existing fee structure.

RECOMMENDED ACTIVITIES

1. Maintain a permanent state-supported structure for nursing workforce planning and development.
2. Explore alternative funding options such as establishment of an account with a community foundation or the UCF Research Foundation.
3. Increase funding allocation for FCN operations to accommodate full-time staff position for research and grant development and full-time staff position for retention and recruitment activities.
4. Solicit donations to support projects and enhance operations.

CONCLUSION

There has been progress in addressing the nursing shortage in Florida. This review found evidence of activities by elected leadership, state agencies, and professional groups. However, although the process to achieve the goal is in place, it is apparent that original evaluation target dates for activities such as an operational forecast model will not be met. Continued commitment on the part of key stakeholders is essential for success. A biennial review of progress will facilitate the necessary strategic approach and aide in identification of priorities. Following is a summary of the priority issues for the goals of the strategic plan.

Goals 1 and 2: Although several state and national organizations collect data, the databases for Florida are limited and incomplete. Enabling legislative language may be required to collect required data and forecast the changing nurse workforce supply and demand. In

order to effectively forecast nurse supply and demand data elements must be defined to meet standardized national definitions and formulas.

Goal 3: With the focus on dissemination of information about effective recruitment and retention methods to nursing employers, what is needed is a one-stop approach. This would ease access to reports about effective strategies that can be promoted by nursing employers for implementation in employment settings.

Goal 4: The intent is to identify ways to support an effective nursing educational system in Florida. Faculty shortage, clinical capacity, program completion, and success on national licensure examination issues must be addressed from statewide and regional perspectives for increased graduation rates and successful entry into the workforce.

Goal 5: To address its statutory mandate, the Center's resources must be expanded. Collaboration among nursing organizations is imperative for success.