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Experts look at simulation uses and potential for nursing education programs in Florida

A recent report from the Florida Center for Nursing found that pre-licensure nursing education programs turned away more than 13,000 qualified applicants during 2008-2009 and, for the third year in a row, limited access to clinical training sites was reported as a major barrier for nursing education programs in Florida. As the state continues to face a shortage of more than 52,000 Registered Nurse FTEs, it is critical that strategies for strategically maximizing education capacity be developed and implemented.

In 2009, The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida was awarded a Partner's Investing in Nursing's Future (PIN) grant to promote the use of simulation technology in Florida nurse education and selected the Florida Center for Nursing to serve as the project lead. The project team recently released the white paper, *Addressing the Nursing Shortage through Simulation*. This white paper provides background information on the different simulation types as well as a number of benefits and pitfalls to simulation in nursing education.

“The use of simulation technology in Florida’s nursing education programs is expanding at a rapid rate, yet little has been done to evaluate existing usage or plan for future developments. This white paper serves as a starting point for understanding simulation in Florida and gives the nation a deeper understanding of the variety of ways simulation is being utilized,” said Dr. Michael Hutton, Ph.D., MFT, Director of Grants Administration for The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida.

The project team also launched a new web page to provide updates on project activities. The white paper and a copy of the two-year project plan can be found at:

http://www.flcenterfornursing.org/simulation_project.cfm.

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The Florida Center for Nursing is the definitive source for information, research, and strategies addressing the dynamic nurse workforce needs in Florida. Established in law (§ 464.0195), the Legislature finds that the Center will repay the state's investment by providing an ongoing strategy for the allocation of the state's resources directed towards nursing. For more information on the Florida Center for Nursing and the nursing shortage in Florida, please visit its Web site at www.FLCenterForNursing.org.

The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida is a separate, philanthropic affiliate of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida (BCBSF), incorporated in the state of Florida. The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida, and its parent, BCBSF, are independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, an association of independent Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies. For more information on The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida, please visit its Web site at www.bluefoundationfl.com.

Partners Investing In Nursing's Future (PIN) is a collaborative partnership between the Northwest Health Foundation and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. PIN provides support to local and regional foundations across the U.S. to make long-term investments in nursing workforce solutions. By supporting the capacity, involvement and leadership of these local funders, PIN addresses national nursing issues through a network of creative and innovative local partnerships. For more information on the PIN collaborative, please visit its Web site at www.partnersinnursing.org.