

# Nurses training for geriatric care

UNMC's College of Nursing has two new initiatives to train more nurses to care for older people.

This spring, the College of Nursing will begin an accelerated post-master's degree geriatric nurse practitioner certificate program. The goal of the 12-week program is to increase the number of nurse practitioners with geriatric expertise in rural and medically underserved communities in Nebraska.

The program, which starts in May, will enable nurse practitioners to complete three courses and a 90-hour clinical requirement through Internet-based learning and videoconferencing systems.

"We need more nurse practitioners to help people remain functional and autonomous so they have a good quality of life and age successfully." said Claudia Chaperon, Ph.D., N'97, '05, assistant professor at the College of Nursing and project director.

In another program, 23 Nebraska nurses are taking a gerontologic nursing course through the Midwest Geriatric Nursing Quality Improvement program.

The 10-week Internet course, which began in January, helps registered nurses employed in long-term care facilities develop knowledge and clinical competence in care of older people. It also prepares them for the American Nurses Credentialing Center Gerontological Nurse Certification exam. Passing the exam demonstrates the highest level of excellence in geriatric nursing care.

Nebraska Geriatric Education Center offers best practices in interdisciplinary geriatric care to health care providers across the state. Here is NEBGEC by the numbers:

- 5,208 participants of online and live programming since 2005.
- Reached 37 sites across Nebraska with 160 hours of live programming and a total of 15,524 contact hours of education on critical aspects of elder care, since 2007.
- 46 people have completed the minifellowship.
- 106 people now enrolled in the geriatric minifellowship.
- 40 online modules available at [www.unmc.edu/cce/gec\\_modules](http://www.unmc.edu/cce/gec_modules)
- Held five two-hour evening conference events attended by 1,579 people at 16 sites across Nebraska since 2007. The next evening conference is scheduled for March 16th, 2010 on "Optimizing Aging by Maximizing Nutrition and Physical Wellness."
- NEBGEC's annual conference is held in Omaha and transmitted to several sites across the state. The next annual conference is June 24 -25.
- NEBGEC's Long Term Care telehealth mental health series targets nursing homes in rural Nebraska. Since 2007, UNMC has conducted 14 live lectures with telehealth transmission to 18 distance sites of which nine are located in medically underserved areas.

More information on NEBGEC: [www.unmc.edu/intmed/geriatrics/nebgec](http://www.unmc.edu/intmed/geriatrics/nebgec)