TITLE: INNOVATIONS IN CLINICAL EDUCATION: THE DEDICATED EDUCATION UNIT

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ABSTRACT
The overall plan of the project is to create an environment and processes that support all participants in the Dedicated Education Unit (DEU). Each Clinical Staff Instructor (CSI) supervises 2 students during clinical rotation. Faculty mentors continue to revamp, based on feedback, the clinical paperwork and evaluation materials to minimize the work of the CSI while maintaining the quality of learning, accuracy of evaluation, and clear communication between faculty mentors, CSIs, and students. Consequently, CSIs have more time to engage students in clinical reasoning activities as well as quality and safety strategies.

The University of Nebraska Medical Center College of Nursing’s clinical partners for the DEU Project include regional health centers as well critical access hospitals. As of spring 2012, DEUs have been established at The Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha, Nebraska, Saint Elizabeth’s Regional Medical Center in Lincoln, Nebraska, Regional West Medical Center in Scottsbluff, Nebraska, Saint Francis Memorial in West Point, Nebraska, Community Memorial Hospital in Syracuse, Nebraska, Memorial Community Hospital in Blair, Nebraska, Memorial Health Systems in Seward, Nebraska and Banner Health Community Hospital in Torrington, Wyoming.

Faculty from three of the five divisions at the CON are involved with the development and implementation of these DEUs. Support from these interested faculty as well as key administrators at the CON and the State Board of Nursing have allowed the project to flourish over the past year. The increase in DEUs has made it possible for the enrollment of additional students and the opportunity for a number of traditional and accelerated students to experience this unique clinical model. The Project Directors continue to meet with other hospitals in Nebraska sharing their vision of the DEU clinical model within nursing education and building the foundation for the implementation of new DEUs. New units with the current hospital partners and Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital in Lincoln, Nebraska will launch DEUs in fall 2012.

To support the development of faculty and CSIs, the CON invited Dr. Larry Michaelsen to present a two day workshop on team-based learning (TBL), a well-known learner centered method of instruction. Furthermore, a task force of key faculty involved in the DEU Project has met to discuss the process of formalizing mentoring faculty within the CON.

The Nurse Simulation Specialist has developed and implemented 71 operational simulations for students and will continue to work with faculty from all campuses to develop and implement all simulated
and virtual activities to support the DEU and the curriculum of the undergraduate nursing program. The
development of each simulation takes up to 2-3 weeks and includes the development of supporting
materials (e.g., history and physical, nurse’s notes, medication administration guidelines, lab results,
doctor’s orders) and completion of the scenario template that consists of the following components:
equipment description, patient information, QSEN competencies, concepts, objectives, critical thinking
questions, equipment list, transcript of scenario and equipment programming. Additionally, the
Simulation Specialist will continue to assist faculty and students on all campuses in the use of all products
and media purchased or developed for simulation. With the assistance of the Information Technologist
(IT) and the training from the companies, the Simulation Specialist learned to fully operate the equipment
quickly. The Simulation Specialist will assist in future goals, including but not limited to: enhancing
faculty training on simulation, marketing simulation to funders, providers, alumni and potential students,
coordinating demonstrations and creating a library of curriculum based simulations.

The IT along with the DEU Coordinator, the GA and a project assistant have been meeting with
our technology team to design a public website showcasing the DEU Project and a password protected
portal to store and share simulations and resource information for students, faculty mentors, CSIs and
hospital administrators.

The DEU Coordinator has been working with the GA and project assistants to develop
administrative policies and procedures as the project develops, such as various tracking systems.
Additionally, the DEU Coordinator manages communications with all DEU sites, plans and coordinates
all meetings and activities and facilitates all components of data collection.