

Southern California New Graduate RN Transition Program

Due to competition with experienced nurses in the workforce, who are either delaying retirement or returning to the workforce as a result of the economic recession, new graduate nurses are unable to secure jobs in the health care industry as registered nurses (RNs). The Health Workforce Initiative (HWI) in collaboration with the nursing schools at the community colleges is coordinating efforts to provide a Transition to Practice program for newly licensed registered nurses who have not found employment. The target population will be those nurses who have been out of school for 12 months or less, have obtained a valid California RN license, and are unable to find positions as RNs. The program's purpose is to improve the employability of these unemployed newly licensed nurses by providing an unpaid preceptored clinical experience as part of a cooperative work experience program at the community colleges. Since participants will be enrolled in a college course, they will be covered for Workman's Compensation and liability insurance. Participants will provide documentation of all clinical requirements for background checks, malpractice insurance, physical exam, and immunizations as required by the college and facility.

Employers will participate in the program by providing the preceptors for the clinical experience and provide resources and/or tools to support training and advancement of nurses (such as equipment, work-based training activities or situations.) They will assist in defining program strategy and goals, identifying necessary skills and competencies to include in the program, such that the training reflects the needs of both nursing workers and employers in the region. Employers will also be asked to identify and refer qualified candidates to the program. These individuals may be those that the employer interviewed and would like to hire, but did not have an open position to offer. Employers will participate on a selection committee along with faculty from the college to review applications according to set criteria to identify program candidates.

The new grad RN will assume the duties of an RN under the supervision of a preceptor. The professor will arrange to contact the preceptor and student at least twice during the course by phone or face to face. The main objective is for the new RN to achieve a better sense of comfort and confidence in decision making for the management of safe and effective patient care.

The program will span 12 weeks and will include a variety of experiential teaching – learning techniques. Instruction will be provided by a pre-selected preceptor for facility based instruction and overseen by a clinical professor of nursing approved by the Board of Registered Nursing, in 8 – 12 hour shifts at least twice a week. The professor and clinical skills specialist will schedule 30-40 hours of campus based instruction in the simulation lab emphasizing the Quality and Safety Education for Nurses (QSEN) concepts and high risk low volume patient conditions, reflective journaling, and debriefing. Emphasis will be on the use of SBAR reporting, clinical judgment, quality improvement, and decision making in patient care.

Core competencies based on the QSEN model were developed by the Northern California RN Transitions Programs. The same competency and evaluation tools will be used in Southern California to be consistent and provide better research data for determining the outcomes of the programs. The core curriculum will also be similar. The RN will be evaluated weekly in a self evaluation using reflective journaling and three times during the 12 week course; once during first week with simulation, then at 6 weeks and 12 weeks by the preceptor and/or professor. A certificate of completion will be issued to the program participants along with their evaluation and list of competencies.