

NURSING TASK FORCE  
A REVIEW OF ITS HISTORY AND  
POTENTIAL NEXT STEPS  
June, 2002

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**Mission of the Greater Flint Health Coalition**

- Improve the health status of the residents of Genesee County. Improve the quality and cost effectiveness of the health care system in our community.

**Vision of the Nursing Education Group**

- To raise the consciousness of the Coalition concerning nursing issues: retention, recruitment & advanced education, and ensure nursing input in Coalition activities.

**Outcome Option of the Nursing Education Group**

- Develop a program for the recruitment of individuals into the nursing field
- Enhance the advanced education of nurses in Genesee County
- Reduce the turnover rate of nurses within Genesee County
- Ensure Nursing input into Coalition activities

(Note: The date for achieving these outcome options was never established.)

**Meetings**

The Nursing Education Group has met eighteen times since February, 1999.

**Attendance**

Neither attendance nor minutes were recorded for the first six meetings. Since March, 2000 (when attendance and minutes started to be recorded), meeting attendance rates have ranged between 50% and 89%. The average attendance rate is 70%.

**Nursing Education Survey—August, 1999**

An estimate of RNs practicing in Genesee County in the late 1990s suggests a lower than national average number of RNs with a BSN. In the Midwest, enrollment in RN baccalaureate programs declined by 7.6% between 1997 and 1998. Based on these two suppositions, it was hypothesized that not only are there fewer than average RNs with a BSN in Genesee County, there are fewer individuals enrolling in entry level baccalaureate programs in the region's nursing schools.

In September 1998, the Directors of Nursing Education at each of the three hospitals in Genesee County and the nursing leadership at the University of Michigan-Flint convened under the auspices of the Greater Flint Health Coalition. The purpose was to (1) discuss the marketing and need of baccalaureate or higher degree education programs

in Genesee County, and (2) to explore the interrelationships between the nursing needs of the three health systems and the University of Michigan-Flint nursing program.

Three objectives were identified:

- To increase the number of baccalaureate-educated RN's in Genesee County
- To identify barriers that may be preventing RNs from pursuing their BSN or MSN degrees
- To assess the needs and interests of RNs practicing in Genesee County

To accomplish these objectives, a survey was designed to profile the needs and interests of RNs in Genesee County.

In August 1999, The Greater Flint Health Coalition released the results from its Nursing Education Survey. Of the 3,000 surveys distributed to RN's in Genesee, Lapeer, and Shiawassee Counties, 665 (22%) were completed and returned to the Coalition. The following bullets represent the key findings from the survey:

- 23% have a Diploma in Nursing; 39% have an Associate Degree in Nursing; 22% have a baccalaureate in Nursing; 16% have a Nursing Degree higher than a baccalaureate.
- 21% of respondents were 35 years old or younger; 35% were between the ages of 36 and 45; 27% were between the ages of 46 and 55; 17% were aged 56 and older
- 67% were RNs with at least 10 years of experience; 21% have 5 years or less of experience; 90% practiced as a registered nurse during the last five years
- 62% were not pursuing a baccalaureate degree at the time of the survey (27% of this group have a Nursing Diploma, 49% have their Associates Degree, 11% have their BSN, 6% have a Baccalaureate in Science, and 6% have a Masters); 10% were pursuing a BSN or other baccalaureate degree at the time of the survey; 28% did not answer this question
- 30% plan on earning a BSN (70% of these indicated they will do so within one or two years); 61% are unsure whether or not to continue with their BSN degree
- The majority preferred part-time classes, preferably once a week
- The majority preferred to attend classes at the University of Michigan-Flint campus
- 68% have access to the internet
- The majority prefer Independent Study (followed by Web-based and Public TV) to complete coursework
- The majority viewed the amount of credit given for previous coursework, time commitment, location of classes, clinic flexibility, commuting time, and flexibility with current employment *as more important in deciding whether or not to pursue a BSN degree than* financial aid, tuition, reimbursement, ease of registration, increased employment opportunities for BSN's, or family support.

Stemming from these data, the UM-Flint nursing leadership indicated an interest in developing inventive nursing programs (such as web-based courses) and marketing

programs (such as on-campus open houses or receptions) that target RNs who want to pursue a BSN. In partnership with the three local hospital systems, marketing strategies were also to be developed to address those individuals who are unsure of their educational plans. Future initiatives were also identified, such as (1) how to ensure the future need for BSNs will be met, (2) to encourage RNs to pursue a BSN/MSN, (3) to convey the message that nursing is a desirable profession, and (4) to recruit high school students into the BSN nursing program.

### **Nursing Education Group discussions and decisions**

- *March, 2000*—the group discussed that all local recruitment efforts should be collaborative
- *May, 2000*—
  - a) Alice Lorenz selected to be the Group Chair
  - b) Ethnicity and culturally sensitive care identified paramount to group
  - c) Terms of Reference approved
  - d) Leanna Krukowski selected to represent the Nursing Education Group within the Cost and Resource Planning Data Review Subcommittee
  - e) Recruitment Video from Michigan League Career Center ordered
- *July, 2000*—Fact sheet/Nursing Brochure concept developed
- *September, 2000*—Genesee Area Skill Center (GASC) Technology Center identified as forum for nursing recruitment
- *November, 2000*—
  - a) Public Television recruitment campaign introduced
  - b) Fact Sheet/Nursing Brochure approved by group
- *May, 2001*—
  - a) Career Alliance, Inc. asks to use the Nursing Education Group as resource in developing an “environmental scan” (i.e. a strategic planning document that incorporates data from the community, business, health, and education sectors)
  - b) Nursing Button Campaign: “Ask Me About It” — 3000 buttons, with an accompanying letter, were distributed through Genesee County’s three health systems, the Genesee County Health Department, and GFHC member organizations
- *February, 2002*—Planning for Nurses Week, 2002 starts
- *May, 2002*—Nursing Appreciation Awards Ceremony

**Addendum to Nursing History Document  
August 5, 2002**

- In January of 2001 and 2002, Nursing Education Group representatives presented information at the Genesee County Counselor's Association Meeting on the following two issues:
  - (1) the nursing shortage
  - (2) the need to recruit to the nursing field
- In the fall of 2001, the Greater Flint Health Coalition Fact Sheet/Nursing Brochure was utilized by the University of Michigan-Flint and Mott Community College at their College Recruitment Activities
- The Nursing Education Group purchased the Michigan League of Nursing Recruitment Video in the fall of 2000. This video was used at (1) the Genesee Area Skill Center recruitment forum, (2) as part of the Public Television recruitment campaign, and (3) at Mott Community College and the University of Michigan-Flint in their recruitment efforts.