



TO: The Honorable the Members of the Board of Regents

FROM: Johanna Duncan-Poitier

COMMITTEE: Professional Practice

TITLE OF ITEM: Follow-Up Activities on Recommendations of the Regents Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Future of Nursing

DATE OF SUBMISSION: March 4, 2002

PROPOSED HANDLING: Discussion

RATIONALE FOR ITEM: Periodic update on addressing the recommendations of the Regents Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Future of Nursing

STRATEGIC GOAL: GOAL #3

AUTHORIZATION(S):

SUMMARY:

In December 2001, Regent Diane O'Neill McGivern presented a report to the Board of Regents on the following six recommendations of the Regents Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Future of Nursing to address the nursing shortage in New York State:

- **Retention:** Support initiatives to retain current nursing workforce, including pursuit of best practice principles such as the magnet hospital model.
- **Recruitment:** Expand the nursing workforce by recruiting additional numbers of men, minorities, non-practicing nurses, and recent high school graduates.
- **Education:** Provide additional academic and financial support systems to increase the pool of nursing school graduates and create career ladders.
- **Technology:** Increase the application of labor-saving technology to eliminate unnecessary, duplicative paper work and improve access to and communication of patient information, thereby improving workplace conditions.
- **Data Collection:** Develop a reliable central source of data on the future need for nurses in the workforce upon which employers, policymakers, futurists, researchers and legislators may base public policy and resource allocations.

- **Clarification of Existing Laws and Regulations** regarding:
 1. **Scope of Practice:** Issue practice guidelines to clarify the legal scope of practice of nursing, including those tasks that do not require licensure. These guidelines will reaffirm the individual practitioner's responsibility for patient care, even within demanding workplace settings.
 2. **Definition of patient abandonment:** Familiarize field with existing Regents regulations which describe patient abandonment, clarifying that refusal to work a double shift or other mandatory overtime in ordinary circumstances does not necessarily constitute professional misconduct.

At the conclusion of the presentation to the Board of Regents on these recommendations, Chancellor Carl T. Hayden requested that a timeline (see Attachment 1) be developed to project and monitor progress by the Task Force, the State Board for Nursing and the Department, in meeting these recommendations. This report provides that timeline and an update on ongoing and projected activities to carry out the recommendations of the Task Force.

Improve Available Data

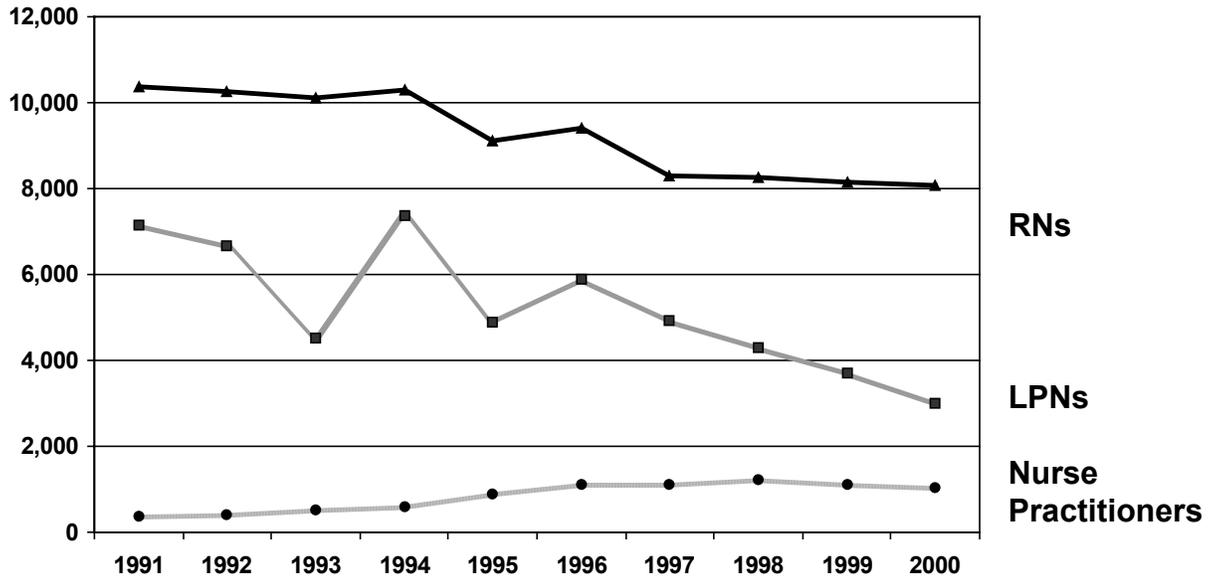
The Department has begun a two-phased approach to collect data in response to the Task Force's recommendation to develop a reliable, central source of data on the need for nurses. The data will be used to guide public policy decisions and resource allocations.

Phase I: Identify and coordinate repositories of existing data

Existing data on the nursing workforce in New York State are plentiful. Researchers, employers, and organizations regularly collect independent data on a wide variety of factors influencing the nursing profession. Some studies sample large numbers of nurses across the State to determine wide-ranging trends while others attempt to uncover specific tendencies of sub-populations of nurses in a single county or region. To facilitate usefulness of existing data and to identify gaps in data on which to build Phase II, the Department is collecting data and reports related to the nursing profession and organizing them based on source, purpose and outcome. Resulting conclusions could prove valuable to employers, policymakers, educators, legislators or others depending on their specific requirements.

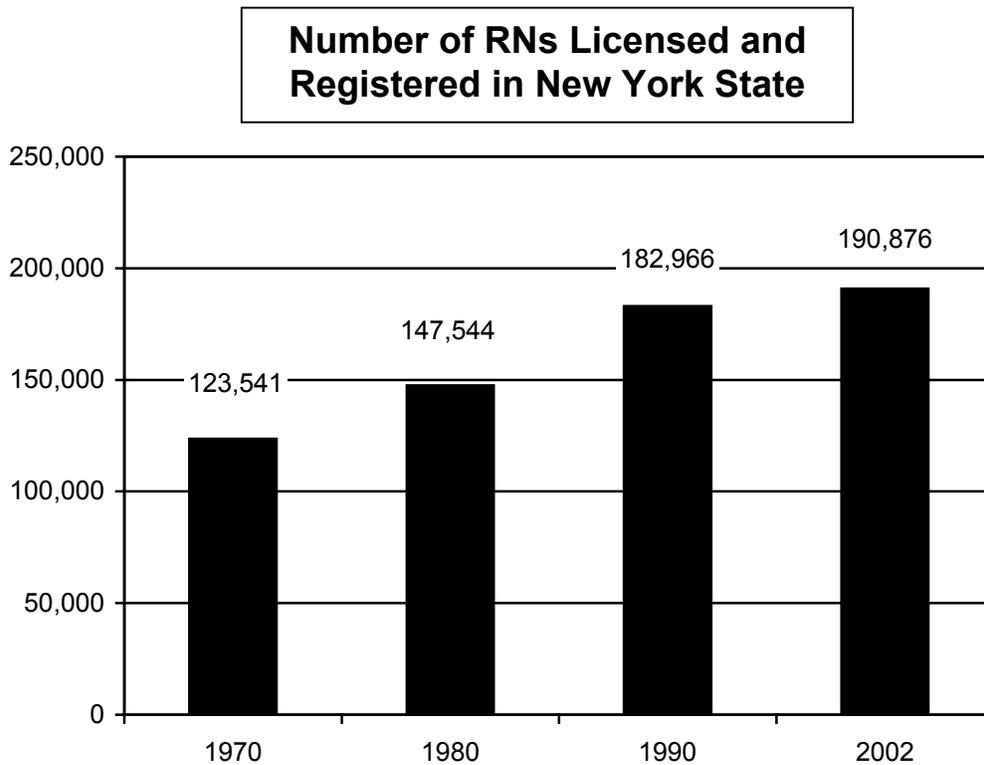
Since the Board of Regents licenses nurses and regulates the practice of the nursing profession in New York State, the Department is also a significant source of existing data on the nursing workforce. In Phase I, Department staff have already begun to identify longitudinal trends in the number of new licensees and annual re-registration counts. For example, over a recent ten-year period, the number of new licenses issued for licensed practical nurses (LPN) has decreased 58%, from 7,139 licenses in 1991 to 3,009 in 2000. Likewise, the number of newly licensed registered professional nurses (RN) has decreased 22%, from 10,365 licenses issued in 1991 to only 8,057 issued in 2000.

**Number of Nursing Licenses Issued
Each Year in New York**



Number of Nursing Licenses Issued Each Year in New York State										
Profession	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
RN	10,365	10,259	10,127	10,290	9,122	9,392	8,301	8,276	8,139	8,057
LPN	7,139	6,685	4,530	7,385	4,902	5,901	4,920	4,290	3,689	3,009
Nurse Practitioner	361	392	520	609	875	1,098	1,120	1,208	1,124	1,042
TOTALS	17,865	17,336	15,177	18,284	14,899	16,391	14,341	13,774	12,952	12,108

In addition, while the total number of licensed and registered RNs increased almost 25% from 1980 to 1990, that number is approaching stagnation. Since 1990, there has been a mere 4.3% increase in licensed and registered RNs in New York State, as the following chart shows.



Staff are also analyzing Department data on the geographic distribution of all licensed RNs in relation to select United States Census data. A partnership with the State Library is being explored to use a Geographic Information System (GIS) to examine and display data. GIS will enable the identification of estimates such as the number of RNs per county in New York State and the ratio of RNs to New Yorkers by geographic region. This information could guide decision-making and resource allocations for key areas significantly impacted by the nursing shortage.

Phase II: Collect new data based upon the gaps identified in existing data

To supplement existing data, the Department will conduct a survey of RNs, which will precisely define the current nursing workforce and track key indicators of the nursing shortage. The Office of the Professions has partnered with the Department's Fiscal Analysis and Research Unit within the Office of Management Services to design and

distribute a comprehensive survey to identify specific characteristics, attributes and expectations of New York's nurses. Workforce surveys administered by the Department in the past are being used as design models. Members of the Blue Ribbon Task Force, the State Board for Nursing, as well as representatives from other professions will be engaged in contributing to the development of the survey tool. The survey tool will be mailed to nurses by September 2002 and the collection and analysis of results will be completed by June 2003.

Clarify Existing Laws and Regulations

Patient Abandonment:

The Nurse Practice Committee of the State Board for Nursing has begun development of guidelines to clarify that refusal to work a double shift or other mandatory overtime in ordinary circumstances does not necessarily constitute professional misconduct. Nurses need to know that threats of charges of professional misconduct for such instances are not warranted. Position statements on this issue have been gathered from throughout the country to inform the work of the Nurse Practice Committee. The Committee's recommendations will be reviewed by the full Board for Nursing and the Deputy Commissioner for the Professions. It is projected that the work of the Committee will conclude by August 2002. Regulatory action, if required, could be considered and implemented by the Regents by February 2003.

Scope of Practice for Nurses:

Practice guidelines are being developed to clarify the legal scope of the practice of nursing, including those tasks that do not require licensure, the use of unlicensed assistive personnel, and the role of the Licensed Practical Nurse performing certain tasks in certain settings. It is projected that practice guidelines on these topics will be available for consideration and approval by the Regents by September 2002. However, providing guidance on practice issues is an activity that has no end since nursing, as all other professions, exists in a dynamically changing environment that challenges licensees to continually consider and update "best practices."

Address Recruitment and Retention Needs

Through the Regents leadership, many of the resources of The University of the State of New York will be tapped to inform students about the nursing profession and encourage nurses to stay in practice.

- The State Board for Nursing has pursued a collaborative relationship with the Office of Elementary, Middle, Secondary, and Continuing Education (EMSC) to work together with school counselors to promote nursing as a viable and desirable career choice. A pilot project is slated to begin in September 2002. Extensive outreach to guidance counselors is projected to occur throughout the 2002-3 school year to be followed by ongoing field outreach.

- The Office of the Profession is supporting outreach through various speaking engagements. Deputy Commissioner Johanna Duncan-Poitier will discuss the nursing shortage as keynote speaker for the annual March of Dimes convention while the Executive Secretary for Nursing will speak to recruiters for nursing students and new nursing graduates in the greater New York City region.
- The State Board for Nursing established a speaker's bureau where Board members speak to student groups about careers in nursing. Board members have presented information to hundreds of students in elementary and junior high schools as well as to parents and other relatives. This activity is ongoing.
- In January, the Department announced the availability of Regents Professional Opportunity Scholarships for New York State residents who are economically disadvantaged and/or a member of an underrepresented minority group and who are beginning or enrolled in an approved nursing program. Deadline for receipt of applications is May 1, 2002. The scholarships directly support the Task Force's recommendation to encourage minorities and men to consider the nursing profession.
- The Department has developed supportive position statements on several legislative proposals that would provide financial benefits to students of nursing science, nurses who choose to stay in the field, and nurses who teach at the post-secondary level. Support would come in the form of scholarship funding, loan forgiveness plans, as well as tax relief prorated on time spent in actual nursing practice. The Department will develop a position on related proposed legislation based on a careful analysis of the cost/benefits of such proposals. This activity is tied to the legislative session calendar.

Develop a Nursing Shortage Clearinghouse

The leadership role of the Regents, through the formation of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Future of Nursing, has focused the attention of many health care providers, educators and legislators on addressing the nursing shortage. Copies of the Task Force report were distributed to all Forum invitees, members of the New York State Congressional delegation, members of the New York State Senate and Assembly, and key members of the Governor's staff. It has also been distributed widely to thousands of individuals in the healthcare and nursing community.

- The report is being read and cited as a reference in articles in the press and by other agencies and organizations reporting on their initiatives to address the nursing shortage. For example, the Spring 2002 issue of *The Independent Sector*, a publication highlighting New York's 100+ private colleges and universities, featured an article titled "Changing the Future of Nursing" which cited the Regents Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Future of Nursing. The article describes initiatives consistent with the recommendations of the Task Force in nine private colleges and universities with nursing programs (see Attachment 2).

- A number of Task Force members are addressing the nursing shortage and implementing recommendations through their respective organizations.
- Other states, other organizations, many private individuals, and the federal government are working hard to solve this impending crisis. Their work is being monitored regularly by State Board for Nursing staff.

Recognizing opportunities for benchmarking and collaboration, the State Education Department will serve as a clearinghouse for sharing information on these efforts. The Office of the Professions will collect periodic reports from Task Force members and from the literature, tracking:

- recent activities or strategies to address the nursing shortage,
- subsequent impacts, and
- contacts for additional information and/or opportunities for alliance.

Information will then be distributed to Task Force members and other designated partners, encouraging further activity and collaboration. Information gathering has already begun. Distribution of information is slated to begin in June 2002.

Conclusion

A major strength of the Regents important role in addressing work force shortages is the ability to initiate dialogue with leaders, provide strong general guidance and direction and clearly articulate the public protection responsibility of all involved. The recommendations of the Task Force have sparked others to initiate activities to address the shortage through local partnerships and activities. The State Board for Nursing will carry out the Regents recommendations and continue to spearhead a variety of efforts to address the nursing shortage from every possible angle and in partnership with all stakeholders. We will continue to gather data, provide information, support professionals, and to contribute to a variety of efforts aimed at solving the shortage.

The Task Force addressed an immediate need in the largest of New York's licensed professions. Signaled by demographic shifts brought about by the aging of the "Baby Boom" generation, however, nearly **all** professions will face similar workforce issues. **Continuous, broad-based, and collaborative action** will be needed to address workforce demands in **all** professions.

As a citizen board with oversight of more than 650,000 licensees in 39 professions and over 200,000 practicing certified teachers, the Regents are well positioned to lead by engaging partners and marshaling resources necessary to address this impending crisis. From the Regents vantagepoint, appropriate strategies and lessons learned in addressing

the nursing shortage workforce can be applied across the spectrum of all the licensed and certified professions they regulate.

Attachment 1: Timeline for Addressing the Nursing Shortage

TIMELINE: ADDRESSING THE NURSING SHORTAGE

Month/ Year	Data Collection				Clarify Existing Laws & Regulations						Share Clearinghouse Information		Recruitment & Retention (Field & Guidance Counselor Outreach)	
					Patient Abandonment			Scope of Practice for Nurses						
	Assemble & Make Current Data Available	Construct & Distribute Survey	Collect & Analyze Results	Complete & Release Results	Research & Gather Input	Distribute	Regulatory Changes Adopted	Gather Input	Distribute	Research & Gather Input	Assemble & Distribute	Planning Stage	Outreach	
Mar-02														
Apr-02														
May-02														
Jun-02														
Jul-02														
Aug-02														
Sep-02														
Oct-02														
Nov-02														
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Aug-03														
Sep-03														

Attachment 2: full text article from the Spring 2002 issue of *The Independent Sector*, a publication of the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities (cicu)

This article is available on CICU's Web site at www.cicu.org/health.html

Changing the Future of Nursing

Nurses are critical to all aspects of health care and disease prevention. But the number of nurses and nursing students is rapidly diminishing. New York State private colleges and universities are helping to reverse that trend.

According to the New York State Regents Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Future of Nursing, experts predict a nursing shortage so severe it will impact the health and safety of New Yorkers. By 2005, the demand for registered nurses (RNs) in New York is projected to exceed supply by more than 17,000 nurses. By 2015, that gap is expected to almost double.

There are many reasons for this shortage: the number of current nurses reaching retirement age; declining enrollments in nursing programs; little interest by young women in nursing as a career; low numbers of males and minority students entering nursing programs; and workplace demands on nurses in terms of shift work, accountability, and stress. At the same time, an aging population has led to increases in the need for health care.

Private colleges and universities in New York State are taking strong and specific measures to help solve the nursing shortage. Because of innovative programs designed to attract students, enrollment in nursing programs is expected to rise at our campuses, a positive outcome for the future health care of all New Yorkers.

- In 1976, in response to a perceived need for educating and graduating more nurses in New York State, The College of New Rochelle established its School of Nursing, an interactive learning environment that provides undergraduate and graduate students with the opportunity to obtain a holistic nursing specialization. The college takes its mission to the community as well, visiting schools to educate students about the nursing profession and its rewards and potential.
- Hartwick College has launched a creative program called "Partnership for Nursing Opportunities," together with the State University of New York College of Technology at Delhi (SUNY Delhi) and Bassett Healthcare. The program offers high-quality education while encouraging graduates to work in upstate New York. Partnership students typically obtain the Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) degree from SUNY Delhi and then work three days a week at Bassett Healthcare while taking courses and clinicals taught by Hartwick faculty, tuition-free. In return, students commit to one year of employment at Bassett for every year of support.

- To address the need for primary health care professionals, the C. W. Post Campus of Long Island University started educating “nurse practitioners” who can provide substantial primary care. Many go on to provide health care to underserved populations such as migrant workers, the homeless, and the elderly, in schools, work sites, and health departments. C. W. Post’s new program offers a dual bachelor’s/master’s degree in either clinical nurse specialist or family nurse practitioner for individuals already licensed as registered nurses. The program increases the number of advanced-practice nurses available to deliver both primary and tertiary care to the Long Island community.
- As fewer people are attracted to nursing as a career, one solution is to help young people, their teachers, and counselors understand that nurses play pivotal roles in providing, managing, and evaluating health care. To introduce school children to the rewards and value of the nursing profession, Mount Saint Mary College is planning to work with youngsters as early as elementary school. As these students move into middle and high school, the college will invite them to the campus for a first-hand look at nursing education.
- New York University has created a task force to address the increasingly severe shortage of registered nurses. The task force plans to provide career information to elementary and middle schools; recruit high school students; offer early college credit to high school students; develop flexible articulation agreements with community colleges to make transferring easier; and to allow individuals with degrees in other fields to complete the nursing program in 15-24 months.
- RNs who return to college for a bachelor’s degree also boost their self-confidence, according to the director of the upper division baccalaureate program for registered nurses at St. Joseph’s College. These students report that they have acquired new leadership skills, treat patients more holistically, value nursing research, and view nursing more as a profession than a task-oriented experience. Students in the college’s nursing program, most of whom are RNs returning to school to earn their baccalaureate degrees, usually work full-time while continuing their education.
- One solution to the nursing crunch is to recruit more students. St. Joseph’s Hospital School of Nursing in Syracuse has doubled its student body from 1999-2001 through creative programs including a weekend nursing program, tuition-free classes in exchange for a work commitment following graduation, agreements with other colleges, and by encouraging nontraditional students to take advantage of educational opportunities in nursing.
- Innovative partnerships and programs at The Sage Colleges have helped to increase enrollment in its nursing division. The college partners with more than 200 clinical sites to help students gain experience in acute care settings; has designed tuition discounts and grant programs to ease the financial burden on nursing students; and customizes programs to the needs of students, offering flexible schedules and a range of specializations that prepare nurses for advanced-practice roles. Sage also created the

“Fast Forward B.S.” in nursing, an accelerated program designed to move trained nurses into the workforce more quickly.

- The greatest demand in the next few years will be for baccalaureate-prepared nurses, and the nursing faculty at Utica College is taking action now by visiting high schools to meet with students and counselors; inviting potential students to the college; offering scholarships for nursing; and initiating programs that retain as well as attract nursing students, such as individual tutoring of nursing students by faculty members. The college is also concerned with the continuing education needs of the practicing nurse and is currently offering courses in forensic nursing, a nontraditional practice area that has career opportunities in correctional facilities, emergency health services, and community health agencies.

Education for life: Nursing degree programs

Adelphi University
(516) 877-3050;
www.adelphi.edu

Maria College
(518) 438-3111
www.mariacollege.org

The School of Nursing of St. Vincents Catholic Medical Centers
(718) 357-0500 x173

Cochran School of Nursing
(914) 964-4296
www.riversidehealth.org

Mercy College
(914) 674-9331 x550
www.mercy.edu

St. Elizabeth College of Nursing
(315) 798-8253;
www.stemc.org

College of Mount Saint Vincent
(718) 405-3268;
www.cmsv.edu

Molloy College
(516) 678-5000 x6240
www.molloy.edu

St. John Fisher College
(716) 385-8068;
www.sjfc.edu

The College of New Rochelle
(914) 654-5804;
www.cnr.edu

Mount Saint Mary College
(845) 569-3138;
www.msmc.edu

St. Joseph’s College
(718) 399-0693 or (631) 447-3255
www.sjcnyc.edu

D’Youville College
(716) 881-7600;
www.dyc.edu

Nazareth College of Rochester
(716) 389-2709;
www.naz.edu

St. Joseph’s Hospital School of Nursing
(315) 448-5040;
www.sjhsyr.org

Daemen College
(716) 839-8225;
www.daemen.edu

New York Institute of Technology
(212) 261-1702 or (516) 686-7925
www.nyit.edu

Syracuse University
(315) 443-3611;
www.syr.edu

Dominican College
(845) 359-7800;
www.dc.edu

New York University
(212) 998-4553;
www.nyu.edu

Trocaire College
(716) 826-1200;
www.trocaire.edu

Elmira College
(800) 9ELMIRA;
www.elmira.edu

Pace University
(212) 346-1225 or (914) 923-2798
www.pace.edu

University of Rochester
(716) 275-2375
www.urmc.rochester.edu

Hartwick College
(607) 431-4780;
www.hartwick.edu

Phillips Beth Israel School of Nursing
(212) 614-6108;
www.bimc.edu

Utica College of Syracuse University
(315) 792-3059;
www.utica.edu

**Helene Fuld College of Nursing of
North General Hospital**
(212) 423-1000 x2

Keuka College
(315) 279-5273;
www.keuka.edu

**Long Island College Hospital
School of Nursing**
(718) 780-1953

Long Island University
(718) 488-1000 or (516) 299-2320
www.liu.edu

Roberts Wesleyan College
(716) 594-6330;
www.roberts.edu

The Sage Colleges
(518) 244-2231;
www.sage.edu

Wagner College
(718) 390-3412;
www.wagner.edu
Yeshiva University
(212) 960-5277;
www.yu.edu

Sidebar: Long-term solutions to the shortage of nurses include increasing awareness of the profession among school children and non-traditional groups, financial assistance, safe and supportive working environments, parity with other professions, and access to higher education to encourage nursing excellence, autonomy, and career development.