

Research to Policy vs. Policy to Research

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Nursing Graduate Guarantee

RESEARCH TO POLICY

Since 2005, the NGG has increased full-time employment for RNs from 58% to 83% and for RPNs from 26% to 56%.

Note: these numbers include temporary FT supernumerary positions

Nursing Graduate Guarantee Initiative

- The results of this longitudinal study (2003 to 2009) impacted on employment status, work integration and preference for employment
- Based on the study results the MOHLTC has invested \$89 million to fund the Nursing Graduate Guarantee Initiative (NGG) in 2007-2008
- The initiative funds full-time supernumerary nursing positions for new nursing graduates as part of the Ministry's Health Human Resource Strategy
- HealthForce Ontario (HFO) is used as an online employment portal

Overall New Graduate Experience with the Portal

- 82% of New Graduates (RN & RPN) rated their overall experience with the Nursing Graduate Portal as Good, Very Good or Excellent

The full-time employment trend is continuing upward

- The Ontario Government is committed to move toward 70% full-time employment

For the past 20 years, employment status for nurses has changed

- In 1998 over 60% were part-time or casual
- Currently, there is 64% full-time employment for all nurses & 76% for new graduates

Study results - On-going crisis

- In rural and remote regions full-time/part-time distribution is still a concern

Where do they prefer to work?

- The Greater Toronto Area continues to be the employment location of choice for many
- The overall employment preference for Registered Nurses remains the hospital and for Registered Practical Nurses a similar trend is seen as last year where more RPN new graduates are interested in acute care areas followed by long-term care

STRATEGIES FOR POLICY

- Invest in workforce planning, workforce profiling and integration into the workforce
- Create policies that encourage full-time employment
- Invest in cross-sector pay equity to increase participation in long-term care
- Invest in conventional and non-conventional recruitment strategies
- Initiate follow-up research on job availability and employment capacity

"Ontario's \$89 million NGG promises newly graduated registered nurses and registered practical nurses six months of full-time employment. It is reversing a 20-year-trend towards part-time and casual work and has been effective in creating full-time jobs for new nursing graduates"

Dr. Andrea Baumann, Co-director, Nursing Health Services Research Unit (McMaster site)

70% FT Nursing LHIN Initiative

RESEARCH TO POLICY

In 2006, the percentage of RNs working full-time in Canada was 56%, while the percentage of RNs working full-time in Ontario jumped to 62% (CIHI, 2006a). It shows the effectiveness of the Ministry's initiative in moving toward the recommended 70% full-time nurse employment target

70% Full-time Nursing Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) Engagement Research Initiative

- The study examined the MOHLTC priority theme of a 70% full-time commitment via an analysis of nurse employment in 4 collaborating LHINs in Ontario: Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant, Central West, South East and South West
- Overall LHIN full-time nurse employment averages are good & they are high compared to the national average (CNO, 2008) but in examining individual organizations, these ratios drop
- Given the limitations of some organizations in reaching the 70% target & nurse preferences for part-time work, it may be more realistic to focus on achieving a 70% average by sector, rather than by organization within each LHIN

Ideal Ratio 70:30

- Since 2000, the MOHLTC has introduced strategies to attain a higher ratio of full-time nurses
- Specifically, a 70:30 full-time to part-time ratio was identified as the goal in as many organizations as possible

Made-in-LHIN Solution; Results

- Approaches have been identified for the 4 LHINs in creating a nursing HHR planning strategy toward local needs. A toolkit for healthcare organizations has resulted, providing a solution for the LHINs by the LHINs. Strategies for advancing 70% Full-time nurse employment include:
- Cross-train nurses to work in multiple units within one organization
- Combine two part-time positions into one full-time line (in larger hospitals)
- Offer nurses the opportunity to work in a specialty area (e.g., surgery) across a number of sites
- Use RPNs to their full scope of practice
- Job share and create modified full-time positions for older nurses

STRATEGIES FOR POLICY

- To reach a 70:30 ratio policy makers need to ensure that employment policies are relevant to all regions and healthcare sectors
- Funding opportunities should be disseminated widely
- Employ communications strategies e.g. e-mail alerts for notification of RFP's and an interactive website/portal for monies, grants, initiatives
- Shared LHIN resources to assist with applications, templates and structures
- Two-way communication involving funding decisions

"Organizations faced unique challenges related to their size, geographic location and employment sector. Smaller organizations in rural areas had difficulty recruiting nurses because they were not able to offer full-time positions. In larger organizations, more opportunity for full-time employment existed because of higher turnover rates and greater numbers of nurses looking for work"

Dr. Andrea Baumann, Co-director, Nursing Health Services Research Unit (McMaster site)

Aging at Home

POLICY TO RESEARCH

In 2006, 50,577 (16%) of the 320,248 nurses in Canada were CHNs. There is little research about the CHN workforce and how it can contribute to improving health system capacity

Aging at Home Strategy

- A study was conducted to investigate the workforce profile of community health nurses and public health nurses
- Ontario's senior population is expected to double in the next 16 years. It is important that resources are available to assist those who wish to remain at home
- Through this strategy, announced August 28, 2007, community living options for seniors will be expanded dramatically, with a wider range of home care and community support services available
- More than \$700 million in funding over three years will be invested through the province's 14 Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) *Aging at Home Strategy website*

Definitions

- Community Health Nurses (CHNs) include Registered Nurses (RNs) and Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs), known as Registered Practical Nurses (RPNs) in Ontario
- Public Health Nurse (PHN) – University prepared registered nurses in the sub set of community nursing assigned to public health programs

Survey Results

- CHNs and PHNs have reached consensus about what their roles should be, but policy makers have not always used evidence based strategies to use these nurses to their full potential

Enablers

- Careful attention to the factors that enable CHNs to practice to their full scope will strengthen recruitment and retention and improve the ability of available CHN resources to enhance health outcomes across the country

STRATEGIES FOR POLICY

- Federal and provincial health authorities need to address the Community workforce data gaps by establishing and testing alternative data sources to enumerate community and public health staff, using provincial databases derived from employer databases

Federal and provincial health authorities could improve community nursing workforce capacity:

- Develop collaborative recruitment & retention strategies amongst employers
- Provide leadership training with emphasis on effective teamwork to assure managers maximize CHN effectiveness
- Provide access to evidence and continuing education for CHNs & managers

"Given the shift from hospital care to in-home and community care and the increased emphasis on public health renewal, it is essential that adequate numbers of skilled staff are available to meet community health care needs. When the nursing shortage escalates, Canada may not be able to meet the demand for Community Health Nurses (CHNs)"

Jane Underwood, Co-investigator, Nursing Health Services Research Unit (McMaster site)