

EDUCATION COMMUNIQUÉ

Fall 2021

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Education Department - education@ncbon.com

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WELCOME

to our newsletter for nursing education programs.

Greetings to all of our nursing education program directors. The Education Department continues to offer resourceful information to all of our pre-licensure nursing programs. We hope you find this information helpful, and encourage you to contact us with any questions. Please share pertinent information with your faculty members and students. Together we will continue to strive for excellence in nursing education.

Education Program Director Orientation

The next Education Program Director Orientation (EPDO) offering will be held virtually on February 2, 2022. All newly appointed program directors approved by the North Carolina Board of Nursing (NCBON) will receive a personal invitation providing meeting details and registration information. This education offering will provide new program directors with information outlining NCBON functions, as well as maintaining compliance with North Carolina regulation relating to nursing education programs.

Education and Practice Committee Update

On August 10, 2021, the Education and Practice Committee met and received testimony from stakeholders with a vested interest in nursing education within North Carolina. The stakeholder group represented education, practice, and regulatory groups. The feedback obtained from the August meeting focused on the following topics:

- approval of new and existing nursing education programs;
- student requirements including clinical experiences and NCLEX scores; and
- curriculum requirements.

The Education and Practice Committee is working a robust plan to meet the established charge of conducting a comprehensive review of the Education Rules. The next meeting for the Education and Practice Committee is November 3, 2021. Meeting details will be posted on the NCBON website in the near future.

Temporary Waivers



The temporary waivers for nursing education programs will expire on December 31, 2021. Each program director is responsible for determining educationally sound modifications that are necessary, for identifying whether the program outcomes have been met, and for validating those students who meet the program outcomes and are eligible to apply to take the NCLEX-RN or NCLEX-PN. Once the temporary waivers expire, program directors must communicate any change(s), along with rationale for the proposed change(s) to NCBON by submitting a [Program Change Form](#). Please also ensure adherence to document submission to the NCBON Education Department via instructions provided within the Program Change Form.

21 NCAC 36 .0321 CURRICULUM states:

(k) Requests for approval of changes in, or expansion of, the program, accompanied by all required documentation, shall be submitted in the format provided by the Board at least 30 days prior to implementation for approval by the Board.

The table below provides additional guidance related to program changes that warrant approval.

| APPROVAL REQUIRED |
|--|
| Substantive changes in philosophy/mission and objectives/outcomes that result in reorganization of curriculum |
| Overall curriculum design revisions (i.e. from traditional curriculum to concept based) |
| Addition of new course or deletion of current course |
| Change in overall credit hours required for program completion (addition or deletion) |
| Change in length of program |
| Expansion of Enrollment (more than 10 students above approved enrollment) |
| Addition of new prelicensure pathway or entry option |
| Addition or deletion of a program site |
| Addition, change, or deletion of a degree offered by the nursing program |
| Change in the Format of Delivery of the Curriculum (i.e. changing from face-to-face to hybrid or to total online delivery) |
| NO APPROVAL REQUIRED |
| Editorial Updates |
| Redistribution of Course Content/Hours |
| Change in faculty assigned to teach the course |

This list is not all encompassing.

*** Remember the program curriculum should be planned by nursing faculty. Changes to the curriculum requires NCBON approval.**

EXAM Department Updates



As we continue to face challenges related to COVID-19, it is important to note nursing shortages continue to Soar at an alarming rate. The Emergency Temporary Graduate RN/LPN Nurse License will remain in effect for issuance through December 31, 2021 with an expiration/validity window of six months. The waivers are limited to North Carolina single state practice privileges.

We ask program directors to advise any students residing in bordering states of the following related to Compact Licensure:

- Only nurses who declare a compact state as their primary state of residence may be eligible for a multistate license. Non-residents of North Carolina should apply through his/her state of residency if seeking multistate privileges (Compact Licensure).
- As a resident of a noncompact state, you may apply for a license by endorsement into a compact state.
- Your eligibility will be limited to a single state license that is valid in that state only.
- As a resident of a noncompact state, you can have as many single-state licenses as desired.

[Click here](#) for additional information.

Postal Updates – Criminal Background Check Packets

On October 1, 2021 the U.S. Postal Service implemented slower delivery standards that may directly impact fall and winter graduates. The current delivery of letters and other mail for first-class will drop to delivery within five days, as opposed to the normal three-day delivery standard for first-class mail.

Students who reside in bordering states, and plan to test for the NCLEX exam in North Carolina, will need to complete the required criminal background check (CBC) as soon as possible. It is important to note, the criminal background check is not required to test in North Carolina. The current changes instituted by the U.S. Postal Service, along with increased State Bureau of Investigation (SBI) processing delays, will require more immediate attention. Adopting familiarity with this process sooner will increase the chance for more accurate and positive results.

For additional updates and information related to licensure, please [click here](#).

All questions should be directed to ExamDept@ncbon.com.

NCLEX Performance Results - The performance results for NCLEX-RN and NCLEX-PN have been posted. [Click here to view the results](#).

Questions related to the NCLEX performance results should be directed to education@ncbon.com.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Save the Date

18th Annual Education Summit
UNC Chapel Hill - Friday Center
February 28, 2022
Registration and meeting details
will be available January 2022.

Legal Scope of Practice

The Legal Scope of Practice course is back online and available to nursing students. Please visit the [NCBON website](#) for more information. To register your students, contact the Practice Department at practice@ncbon.com.

Resources



Quality Indicators

Quality indicators are evidence-based measures of nursing education outcomes that are readily available data to track program performance (Spector, et. al., 2020). Evidence-based quality indicators for nursing education programs are an integral part of the NCBON mission to protect the public. The following resources are provided to enhance knowledge of quality indicators of approved nursing education programs, and the warning signs indicating a program may be falling below required standards.

Spector, N., Silvestre, J., Alexander, M., Martin, B., Hooper, J. I., Squires, A., & Ojemeni, M. (2020). NCSBN Regulatory Guidelines and evidenced-based quality indicators for nursing education programs. *Journal of Nursing Regulation*, 11(2), 51–564. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s2155-8256\(20\)30075-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/s2155-8256(20)30075-2).

[NCSBN Regulatory Guidelines and Evidence-Based Quality Indicators for Nursing Education Programs](#)

[NCSBN's Core Data Annual Report Template](#)

[Guidelines for Prelicensure Nursing Program Approval](#)

Practice/Academic Partnership

Practice-academic partnerships are formalized relationships between an academic nursing program and care setting and may include other professionals, corporations, government entities, and foundations (Beal et. al, 2012). Partnerships between clinical agencies and nursing education programs are encouraged. Both entities should collaboratively determine activities and appropriate clinical assignments that facilitate the nursing student learning experience and enable them to meet course outcomes. Check out the NCSBN resources on Practice/Academic Partnerships! This webpage, [Practice/Academic Partnership | NCSBN](#) has a collection of resources to enhance knowledge about practice partnerships including:

Policy Briefs supporting Practice/Academic Partnerships

Testimonials Videos from states that have implemented the Practice/Academic Partnership model

American Journal of Nursing Webinar on real life Practice/Academic partnership implementation strategies

Leader-to-Leader Special Issues on nursing leadership perspectives on Practice/Academic partnerships

Beal, J. A., Alt-White, A., Erickson, J., Everett, L. Q., Fleshner, I., Karshmer, J., ... & Gale, S. (2012). Academic practice partnerships: A national dialogue. *Journal of Professional Nursing*, 28(6), 327-332.

Additional Resources

NCSBN is pleased to present the Regulatory Exam - Practical Nurse (REx-PN) Conference; a one-day, virtual conference that provides educators with an overview of the REX-PN. The conference will be held November 9, 2021. For additional information, please click [here](#).

NC AHEC is presenting the 2022 Academic Progression Conference: Building the Future of Nursing Workforce to be held February 3, 2022. Additional details can be found [here](#).

NCSBN and eight other leading nursing organizations have issued a policy brief to provide guidance to boards of nursing and nursing education programs that are receiving requests from students for alternate clinical experiences when a program's clinical sites require the COVID-19 vaccine. Please view the policy brief on the pages that follow.

Sept. 27, 2021

Policy Brief: Clinical Experiences for Unvaccinated Nursing Students

Purpose

To provide guidance to boards of nursing and nursing education programs that are receiving requests from students for alternate clinical experiences when the program's clinical sites require the COVID-19 vaccine.

Context

Currently, nursing programs are receiving requests from unvaccinated students to provide alternate experiences when the designated clinical facility mandates the COVID-19 vaccine. These requests range from using 100% simulation as a substitute for the clinical experience to the program finding other types of activities and case studies/scenarios.

Much of the fear and concern over receiving the vaccine is based on misinformation and lack of knowledge about the vaccine and its development (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2021). According to one study, as of August 2021, 92% of nursing faculty were vaccinated or planned to be vaccinated and 86% of currently enrolled students have been vaccinated (National Student Nurses Association, 2021). Thus, it is a small number of students who are vaccine-hesitant and affected by vaccine mandates. This policy addresses these students.

Clinical experiences are integral to nursing education. NCSBN's National Simulation Study (Hayden et al., 2014) demonstrated that up to 50% of clinical experience can be substituted with simulation. According to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) *The Essentials: Core Competencies for Professional Nursing Education (2021)*, "Simulation experiences represent an important component of clinical education... However, care experiences with actual individuals or groups continue to be the most important component of clinical education...Simulation cannot substitute for all direct care practice experiences in any one sphere or for any one age group." (page 21)

As of Aug. 23, 2021, the Pfizer vaccine has received full Food and Drug Administration approval. The vaccine protects health care professionals and students as well as patients. In fact, millions of people in the U.S. have received COVID-19 vaccines. All three of the vaccines available in the U.S. have undergone the most rigorous safety monitoring in U.S. history (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021).

The COVID-19 vaccine's authorization is based on scientific evidence (Food and Drug Administration, 2021). Identifying, assessing, and integrating reliable evidence into one's practice has been and continues to be an expectation for the preparation of professional nurses (AACN, 2021, 2008).

Unvaccinated individuals are at risk for contracting COVID-19, thereby increasing the chances for more variants to emerge and, more importantly, putting vulnerable individuals at risk; especially hospitalized patients, nursing home residents, health care professionals and peers who may be immunocompromised. (Plater, 2021).

Recommendations

- Students should be vaccinated when clinical facilities require it so that they can participate in the clinical experience and progress in their programs.
- Nursing education programs should reach out to students who are vaccine-hesitant and counsel the students about the benefit of the vaccine and the need for it as a student enrolled in a nursing program, and address myths and misleading information about the vaccine.
- Course descriptions should include that a clinical component is required.
- Nursing education programs are mandated by boards of nursing as well as accreditors to provide students with clinical experiences. They are not obligated to provide substitute or alternate clinical experiences based on a student's request or vaccine preference.
- Just as the nursing education program and/or clinical facilities require other vaccines, the facilities have the option to mandate the COVID-19 vaccine.
- Boards of nursing have no obligation to waive their current rules/regulations about clinical experiences for unvaccinated students.

- Transparency is essential. Even if mandated by the academic institution, students can refuse the vaccine. Therefore, if the student refuses to be vaccinated and is not entitled to a reasonable accommodation under the disability laws* or is not entitled to a reasonable accommodation for a sincerely held religious belief* then, the student (a) may be disenrolled from the institution/nursing program or (b) may not be able to fulfill the clinical requirements of the program, resulting in them not graduating.
- Accommodations made for students under the disability laws or for a sincerely held religious belief should be decided on a case by case basis.

* In providing an academic adjustment to students with disabilities, post-secondary schools are not required to lower or substantially modify essential requirements. (U.S. Department of Education, 2011)

References

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- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021, August 19). Key things to know about COVID-19 vaccines. Retrieved from https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/keythingstoknow.html?s_cid=10493:covid%2019%20vaccine:sem.ga:p:RG:GM:gen:PTN:FY21
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- National Student Nurses Association. (2021, August 16). Survey of vaccination status July 1 – August 15th for nursing students, faculty and new graduates reveals unexpected results. Retrieved from https://www.nсна.org/uploads/2/2/4/5/22459246/national_student_nurses_press_release_-_report_of_july_2021_survey_of_vaccination_rates_-_final.pdf
- Plater, R. (2021, August 10). Unvaccinated people are increasing the chances for more coronavirus variants – here’s how. *Healthline*. Retrieved from <https://www.healthline.com/health-news/unvaccinated-people-are-increasing-the-chances-for-more-coronavirus-variants-heres-how>
- United States Department of Education. (2011). Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities. Retrieved from <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html>
- United States Department of Health and Human Services. (2021). Addressing COVID-19 vaccine misconceptions. Retrieved from <https://wecandothishhs.gov/outreach-tools/addressing-covid-19-vaccine-misconceptions>

Endorsements

- National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN)
- Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN)
- American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN)
- American Nurses Association (ANA)
- American Organization for Nursing Leadership (AONL)
- National League for Nursing (NLN)
- NLN Commission for Nursing Education Accreditation (CNEA)
- National Student Nurses' Association (NSNA)
- Organization for Associate Degree Nursing (OADN)