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Holistic Admissions Criteria Promising Approaches

December 16, 2015

Presenters:

Barbara L Nichols, DNSc (hon) MS, RN, FAAN State Implementation Program Coordinator, Diversity, Wisconsin Action Coalition

Antonia M. Villarruel Ph.D, FAAN, Margaret Bond Simon Dean of Nursing, University of Pennsylvania

Patricia Polansky RN, MS, Director, Program Development and Implementation, Center to Champion Nursing in America

Gloria V. Hawkins, Ph.D. Assistant Vice Chancellor and Director Chancellor's and Powers-Knapp Scholarship Programs University of Wisconsin-Madison

Greer Glazer, RN, CNP, PhD, FAAN, Dean, University of Cincinnati College of Nursing *Schmidlapp Professor of Nursing*

Goals:

- The purpose of this Learning Collaborative is to discuss promising admissions practices that can broaden the diversity of a school's student body.
- Guest speakers who will talk about their initiatives and perspectives include leaders in higher education and the Campaign for Action:

Across the country, there is a movement to advance the field of nursing so that all Americans have access to high quality, patient-centered care in a health care system where nurses contribute as essential partners in achieving success. This national level [Future of Nursing: Campaign for Action](#) is a result of the Institute of Medicine's landmark 2010 report on the [Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health](#).

The *Campaign for Action's* field-based teams, the [Action Coalitions](#) (ACs), are leading this movement and are equipping themselves with knowledge gained from technical assistance provided by the Center to Champion Nursing in America (CCNA), a joint initiative of AARP, the AARP Foundation, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Such technical assistance comes in the form of webinars, face to face interactions, and other facilitated engagements with public policy leaders, content experts, consultants, and Action Coalition peers across the country.

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Barbara L. Nichols, DNSc (hon) MS, RN, FAAN

State Implementation Program Coordinator, Diversity Wisconsin Action Coalition

The changing face of America means that its nurses must be equally diverse. That's one reason the Institute of Medicine's *Future of Nursing* report set as a goal greater diversity in the nursing workforce.

The good news is that data are available to guide Action Coalitions in creating a more diverse workforce.

This webinar will help states find and use facts and statistics to assess and track the diversity within their state's nursing workforce and among graduates of nursing programs. Participants will also learn how to develop a "diversity ratio"—comparing diversity among nurses in each state to the state's population.

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Antonia M. Villarruel Ph.D, FAAN *Margaret Bond Simon Dean of Nursing University of Pennsylvania*

Villarruel has embedded a video into the power point presentation, which you can see at www.campaignforaction.org/webinars.

In that video she makes a strong case for why diversity matters. There is a history of research that extols the benefits of diversity. Diversity also is key in reducing health disparities. As a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, she says it is essential to recruit a diverse student body. She also has adopted holistic standards that evaluates a person not just on grades but on other factors as their social skills and their commitment to the community.



Patricia Polansky RN, MS *Director, Program Development and Implementation Center to Champion Nursing in America*

Polansky focused on education and diversity. Diversity in student populations does not translate into faculty careers.

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The need to attract diverse nursing students is paralleled by the need to recruit more faculty from minority populations.

Men only comprise 6.2 % of the nation's nursing workforce, however, percentage has climbed steadily since the NSSRN was first conducted in 1980.

<http://bhpr.hrsa.gov/healthworkforce/rnsurvey2008.html>

RNs from minority backgrounds are more likely than their white counterparts to pursue baccalaureate and higher degrees in nursing.

Data from 2008 show that while 48.4% of white nurses complete nursing degrees beyond the associate degree level, the number is significantly higher or equivalent for minority nurses, including African American (52.5%), Hispanic (51.5%), and Asian (75.6%) nurses. <http://bhpr.hrsa.gov/healthworkforce/rnsurvey2008.html>

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The workforce an Action Coalition should be 65 percent minority in the first year and 80 percent in the second year. Currently only 17 percent of the registered workforce are minorities.

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She added that professional nurses need an understanding of diversity and consider speaking in middle schools. “That’s where the young people are,” who may have an interest in nursing.

Action Coalitions Should Develop a Diversity Action Plan.

- ✓ Grounded in the IOM recommendations.
- ✓ Embed diversity throughout AC efforts.
- ✓ Be data-based and data-driven.
- ✓ Evidence-based; use lessons learned from other Action Coalitions, institutions and gender, racial/ethnic minority organizations.
- ✓ Include mechanisms to sustain and scale up efforts over time.

Action Coalitions should:

- ✓ Examine your state’s demographics to consider health challenges and needs in your state.
- ✓ Reach out to individuals and organizations that can represent state’s specific needs and contribute to overall work of the Action Coalition.
- ✓ SIP Grantees focused on improving diversity when addressing education and leadership recommendations through its SIP grant.
- ✓ The diversity task force should be charged with keeping diversity front and center for each pillar subgroup.
- ✓ Find people to speak in middle schools or Area Health Education Centers to enhance interest in nursing.

There is little research on minorities in Nursing. Here are a few examples:

- Feelings of alienation and loneliness (Allen, Nunley, & Scott-Warner, 1988; Suarez & Fowers, 1997)

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- Language (Abriam-Yago, Yoder, & Kataoka-Yahiro, 1999; Colling & Liu, 1995; Klisch, 2000)
- Discrimination (Janes, 1997; Kirkland, 1998; Villarruel, Canales, & Torres, 2001; Yoder, 1996, 1997, 2001)
- Financial difficulties and institutional barriers (Hesser, Pond, Lewis, & Abbot, 1996; Ormeaux, 1990; Sutton, 1999; Villarruel et al., 2001)
- Academics (Kirkland, 1998)



Gloria V. Hawkins, Ph.D. *Assistant Vice Chancellor and Director*
Chancellor's and Powers-Knapp Scholarship Programs, University of Wisconsin-
Madison

What is Holistic Admissions?

Holistic admission looks beyond the student's test scores and involves a comprehensive review of the applicant.

Considers many factors in determining admissions of student

- Background
- Grades and test scores
- Extracurriculum activities
- Ability to overcome challenges
- Special talents
- Letters of recommendations

Equal consideration given to grades and test scores and grades, attributes and experiences.

Hawkins said that all institutions using holistic admissions have benefited.

Vision and Mission of the institution and/or academic unit are linked to Holistic Admissions

- The institution's values and long term goals, as defined in its vision statement, provide the framework or direction for how to move forward.
- The mission defines the institution and provides the context for using holistic admissions in the selection process Why take a holistic approach to admissions instead of using the traditional process.

Why take a holistic approach to admissions instead of using the traditional process?

Traditional process

Student potential for college success is narrowly defined (primarily grades and test scores)

- ❖ Constituents can influence the process
- ❖ Legacy admissions
- ❖ Athletes as special Admissions
- ❖ Alumni
- ❖ Donors
- ❖ other influential constituents

Holistic Admissions

- ❖ Provides access to college to a diverse student population
- ❖ Gives equal consideration in the selection process to grades and test scores, student experiences and attributes
- ❖ Linked to both the vision and mission of the institution

What responsibilities does the institution or academic unit have?

- Provide Educational Opportunities that prepare students for college
- ✓ Pipeline Programs
- ✓ Outreach Programs such as workshops, campus visits and presentations at school and community events

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- Form Partnerships
 - ✓ Education institutions (K-12 schools)
 - ✓ Community based agencies with educational components
 - ✓ Churches
 - ✓ Other statewide programs such as AHEC
- Evaluate how the institution is carrying out its mission

What outcomes does the institution/academic unit wish to see?

- Return on its investment
- Students that reflect the values of the institution and contribute to the campus community
- Students success –good/increase in retention and graduation rates
- Students that add to the diversity of the campus
- Strong academics and special talents
- Extra-curriculum activities (leadership and service)
- Different perspectives and experiences
- Under –represented Groups
- Disadvantaged socio-economic background
- Racial and ethnic minorities
- Other underrepresented groups (such as rural and urban
- First Generation College students
- Geographic locations

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Greer Glazer, RN, CNP, PhD, FAAN, *Dean, University of Cincinnati College of Nursing, Schmidlapp Professor of Nursing*

[Holistic Admissions: A Promising Admissions Practice](#)

This project was supported by the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities of the National Institute of Health.

college of nursing

[What is Holistic Review?](#)

- Flexible, individualized way of assessing an applicant that considers:
 - Student's life experiences
 - Personal qualities and attributes
 - Traditional measures (e.g., GPA and test scores)

If a student with high scores can't relate to Patients then nursing is not their profession. Others may have lower scores but can deal with patients, said Glazer.

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At the University of Cincinnati School of Nursing there are various factors considered for an applicant:

- Below, meets or exceeds standard (“A student who gets below a C in biology won’t make it”)
- Traditional measures- GPA, test scores
- Essays- general & nursing
- Experiences & attributes-curricular awards, work and life experience
- Characteristics such as empathy, good communicator, passion
- Social/geographic factors such as low SES, first generation Cincinnati, public graduate

Four Core Principles

1. Broad-based selection criteria linked to school mission and goals, and promote diversity as an essential element for excellence.
2. A balance of experiences, attributes, and academic metrics (EAM) are used, and applied equitably across the entire candidate pool. Criteria are grounded in evidence supporting their use beyond academic metrics.
3. Individualized consideration to how each applicant may contribute to the school and the profession.
4. Race/ethnicity may be considered when narrowly-tailored to the mission and as part of a broader mix of factors.

Adapted from AAMC materials

The idea is to craft an entire holistic class for your school,” said **Glazer**.

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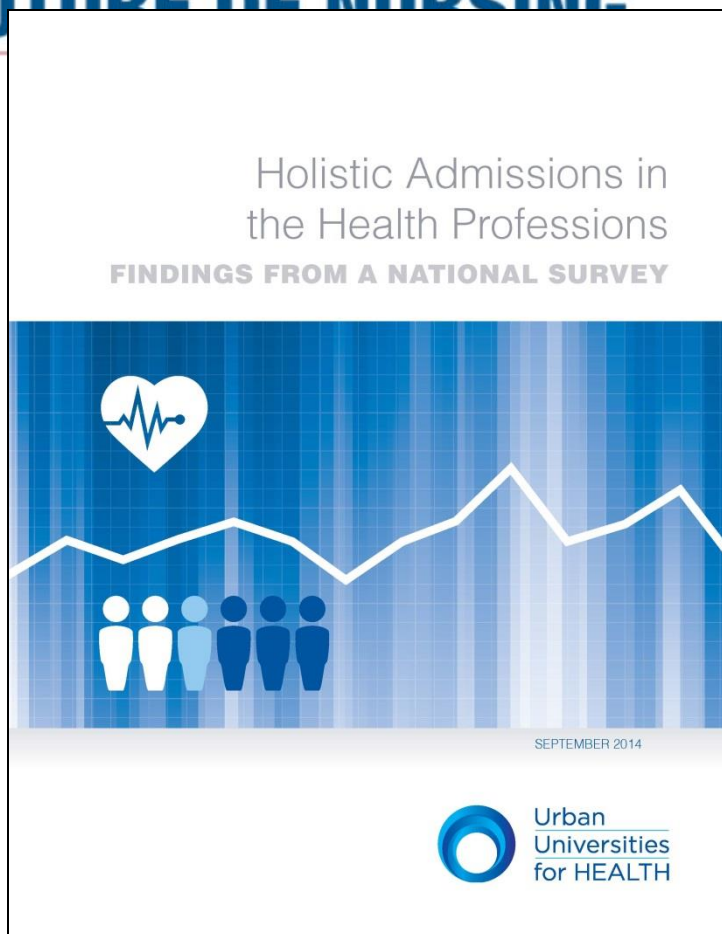
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Survey Process

- ✓ An Electronic survey was sent to 163 public universities.
- ✓ Primary degree programs in dentistry, medicine, pharmacy, public health and nursing
- ✓ Dual approach to assessing use of holistic review (self-reported and objective assessments)

Study Goals: Phase 1



- ✓ Document extent of use of holistic review in health professions
- ✓ Understand impact of holistic review on diversity, student success, and learning environment

This is not just an individual student but an entire class, said **Glazer**.

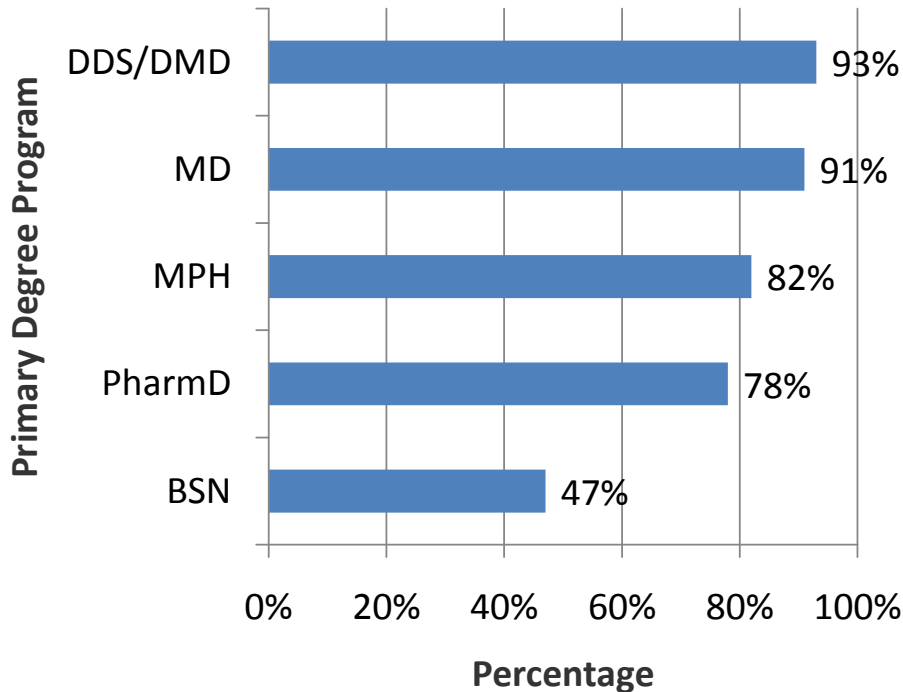
- ✓ The response rate was 64%
- ✓ 228 health professions schools from 104 institutions participated

Use of holistic review varies by field

Key Finding 1

75 % of health professions schools report change:

Self-reported use of holistic review by health profession



“Nursing is just catching up,” said Glazer.

Key Finding 2

The impact of holistic review has been positive overall, and across various metrics of student success.

What is the Evidence?

- ✓ 72% of survey participants using holistic review that track diversity outcomes (N=132) said diversity of the incoming class had *increased*.
- ✓ Average GPA of incoming class (N=136):
 - 38% increased

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- 52% unchanged
- 10% decreased

Graduation rate (N=104):

- 16% increased
- 80% unchanged
- 4% decreased
- Similar results reported for average GPA of graduating class, and number of attempts needed to pass clinical exams
- These numbers are for all health profession schools using holistic review *and* evaluating these outcomes

Outcome	Outcome tracked <u>AND</u> school is using holistic admission
Student engagement with the community	64%
Cooperation and teamwork among students	55%
Student openness to ideas different from their own	50%

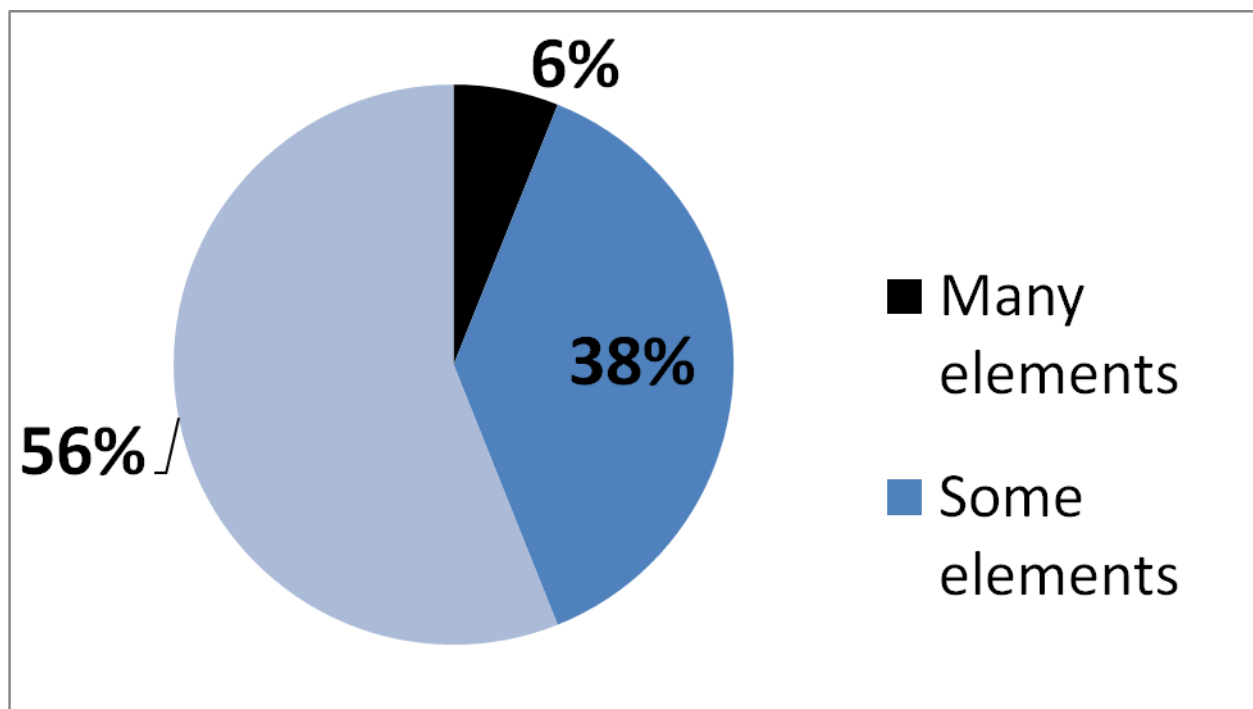
- ✓ Nearly all schools (**91%**) rated the impact of holistic review as "positive," with the remainder rating impact as "neutral/no discernable impact."

Key Finding 3

Health profession schools focus on diversity in their mission and goal statements, but diversity practices are less prevalent.

Diversity Mission & Practices

- **92%** include diversity in mission and/or goals
- **53%** include diversity staff on committee
- **51%** diversity training
- **49%** diversity in admissions statement
- **31%** include members of community on committee



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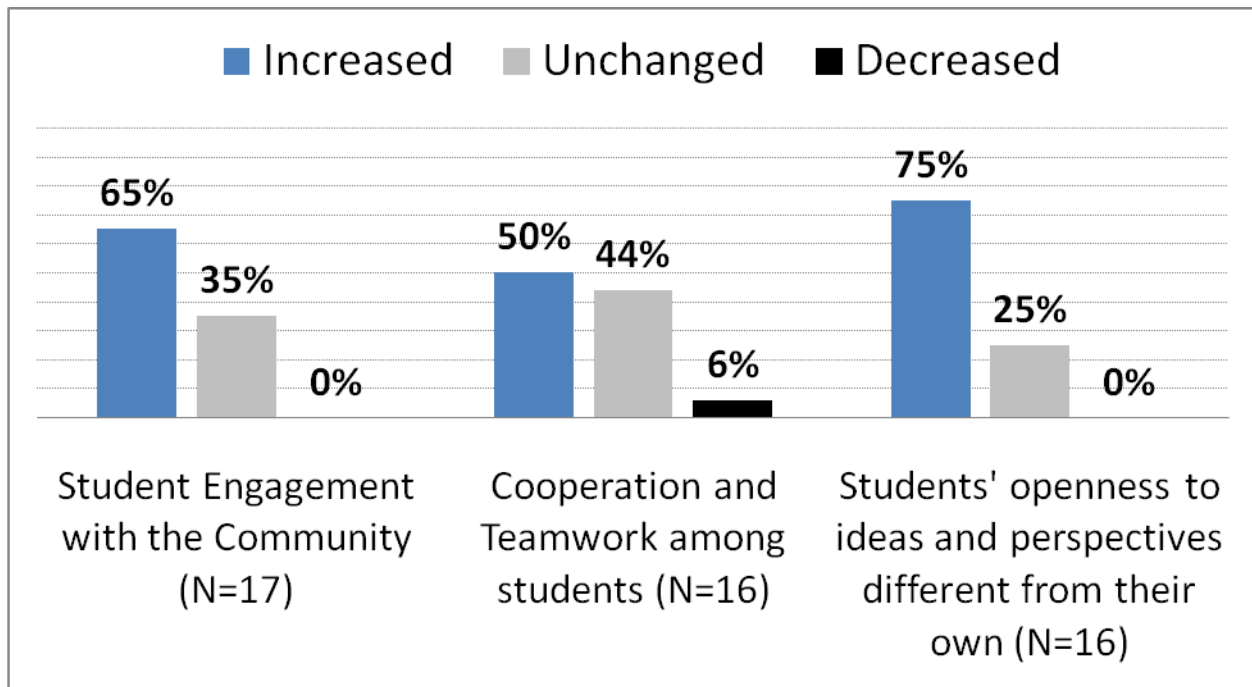
56 percent of BSN respondents reported few or no elements.

On the diversity of the incoming class, 61 percent said there was an increase, 39 percent said it was unchanged.

Incoming class academic measures show 58 percent increased, 38 percent unchanged and 4 percent decreased. Student retention rates: 33 percent increased, 61 percent unchanged and 6 percent decreased.

The average GPA of the graduating class: 47 percent increased, 47 percent decreased and 6 percent unchanged.

Other measures of student success:



Overall Impact

- ✓ 97% of BSN programs that implemented holistic review said that the overall impact was generally “positive.”
- ✓ 3% of BSN programs said the impact was “Neutral/no discernible impact”
- ✓ 0% said the impact was negative

Study Goals: Phase 2

Why is the use of holistic review so uncommon in nursing?

- ✓ Initial set of two focus groups of nursing deans at AACN March 2014.
- ✓ Goal was to identify barriers to implementation of holistic review in nursing
- ✓ Second set of focus groups at USU in June 2014 reviewed barriers and proposed solutions

Focus Group 1

Barriers to Implementation

- Lack of knowledge regarding holistic review
- Difficulty obtaining buy-in from leadership and administration
- Insufficient on-campus resources
- Other nursing-specific barriers (e.g. multiple pathways to BSN)

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Focus Group 2

Solutions Proposed by Nursing Deans

- Everyone's buy-in is required
- Need a model for holistic review in nursing
- Need for training and tools

Next Steps

Goal 1

- Develop workshops for nursing leaders
- Early phases of developing a training program
- Partnership with HRSA, NIH and AACN

Goal 2:

- Create a toolkit with products for dissemination
- Self-assessment tools
- Legal guidelines
- Outcomes to track
- Information on non-cognitive criteria (e.g., language, service activities, resilience)
- Sample essay questions

Goal 3: Create a learning community to support continuous improvement

- Learning collaborative of nursing schools

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- Online community/web portal
- Webinars

Diversity Learning Collaborative WebEx

Every 3rd Wednesday of Month

Next Webinar on Wednesday, January 20

Time 3:00 PM ET – 4:00 PM ET

The IOM's recommendations include: the need for more advanced education of registered nurses; nurses leading innovations in health care and being appointed to decision making bodies; all nurses practicing to the full extent of their education and training; a more diverse nursing workforce and faculty; and more interprofessional collaboration among nurses, physicians, and other members of the health care team in the educational and clinical environments.

For more information from the Center to Champion Nursing in America about this webinar, technical assistance or other questions related to the Future of Nursing, Campaign for Action contact Natalie Moulding at nmoulding@aarp.org or Madeline O'Brien at mobrien@aarp.org

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