

Nurse Support Program II: FY 2013 Competitive Institutional Grants

Health Services Cost Review Commission
4160 Patterson Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21215
410-764-2605

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This final recommendation was approved at the June 6, 2012 Public Commission Meeting.

Background

This recommendation presents the Evaluation Committee and HSCRC staff recommendations for the FY 2013 Nurse Support Program II (NSP II) Competitive Institutional Grants.

In 2005, the Commission approved funding of 0.1 percent of regulated patient revenue annually for ten years for use in expanding the pool of bedside nurses in Maryland by increasing the number of nurse graduates. NSP II aims to increase the number of bedside nurses by expanding the capacity of Maryland nursing schools and, thereby, increase the number of nurse graduates. NSP II consists of two distinct but complementary programs to address the multi-faceted issues surrounding the nursing faculty shortage. These are the Competitive Institutional Grants and the Statewide Initiatives.¹

The Competitive Institutional Grants are designed to increase the structural capacity of Maryland Schools of Nursing through shared resources, innovative educational designs, and streamlining the process to produce additional nurse faculty.

The types of initiatives that qualify for Competitive Institutional Grants are:

1. Initiatives to expand Maryland's nursing capacity through shared resources, to combine and integrate resources to allow for immediate expansion of nursing enrollments and graduates
2. Initiatives to increase Maryland's nursing faculty by streamlining the process for the attainment of Master's and Doctoral Degrees in Nursing to increase nursing faculty.
3. Initiatives to improve nursing student retention by providing tutorial support to decrease attrition, increase graduation rates, and increase National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) pass rates
4. Initiatives to expand the pipeline for nursing faculty by streamlining and facilitating the transition between institutions for nurses with either an Associate Degree in Nursing or a Bachelor of Science in Nursing to pursue a Master's Degree in Nursing, thereby increasing the pool of qualified nursing faculty
5. Initiatives to increase capacity statewide by providing support for innovative programs that have a statewide impact on the capacity to train nurses or nursing faculty

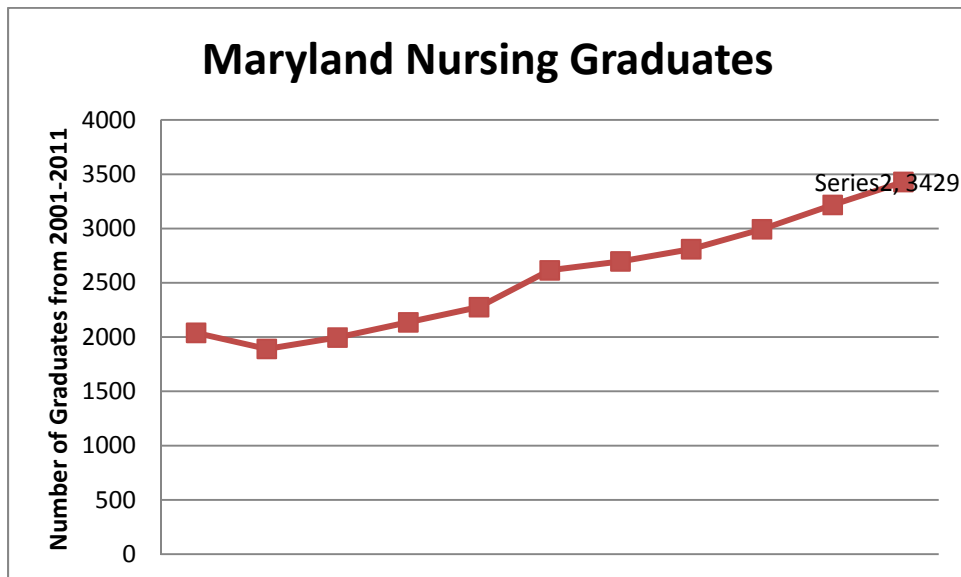
Impact of NSP II Competitive Institutional Grants

Data from the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) and the Maryland Board of Nursing demonstrate success in increasing the number of nursing graduates in Maryland.²

- In FY 2011, 3,429 nursing graduates completed programs designed for entry to practice with 2,519 passing NCLEX for licensure. This is an increase from the 2,615 new nursing graduates in FY 2006 with 2,039 passing NCLEX for licensure. Overall, the trend for five years has been a 19 percent increase in new graduate nurses.

¹ Statewide Initiatives include the Hal and Jo Cohen Graduate Nursing Scholarship, New Nurse Faculty Grants, and Dissertation Support Awards.

² The HSCRC contracts with the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) to administer the NSP II program.



- The increase in new faculty prepared nurses to sustain nursing educational capacity in FY 2011 reflects a total of 505 new degrees awarded at the graduate level. Since the 303 new Master's and Doctoral Degrees awarded in FY 2006, there has been a significant increase. The outcomes seen here with the joint partnership of MHEC and HSCRC are strongly associated with decreased vacancy rates reported by the Maryland Hospital Association and increasing stabilization of faculty openings in nursing programs reported by Maryland Deans and Directors of Nursing.

From FY 2006 - 2012, outcomes reported through the Competitive Institutional Grant projects indicate over 1,000 new Registered Nurses graduated with an additional 300 nurses returning to school to complete the BSN, 250 completing graduate education, and 100 completing a post-graduate level certificate in education. Nursing programs have hired over 35 new full-time nursing faculty through NSP II in the past academic year with nearly half of the hired faculty from under-represented minorities in nursing. NSP II is directly expanding gender, racial, and ethnic diversity in nurse faculty.

The Nurse Support Program II is frequently referenced in nursing and health care industry journals. Several teams from Maryland will make presentations at the Sigma Theta Tau International 23rd International Nursing Research Congress in July, 2012 with reference to the NSP II program model for nursing education.

Competitive Institutional Grant Selection Process

Request for Applications for Competitive Institutional Grants are distributed annually by MHEC and HSCRC to all schools of nursing, and posted on MHEC's website with an invitation to meet with program staff at Technical Assistance Meetings. The NSP II's focus is on the education of nurses; therefore, the concentration is on the nursing educational system including university, college and community college schools of nursing, as well as hospital and school consortia. The application is structured with detailed instructions in each of seven sections for a total of 15 pages, including a proposed budget utilizing a standardized format.

The Competitive Institutional Grant selection processes require an Evaluation Committee to review, deliberate, and recommend programs for final approval by the HSCRC. The Evaluation

Committee reviews each application based on the criteria set forth in the RFA with specific scoring for each section. Consideration is given to the geographic distribution across the State with priority attached to attracting and retaining minorities in nursing and nursing faculty careers.

NSP II Competitive Institutional Grants from FY 2007 – FY 2012

Between FY 2007 and FY 2012, nursing programs have submitted 95 NSP II Competitive Institutional Grant applications, and the HSCRC has approved and funded 67 applications. Over that period of time, the program has provided \$51 million in funding for projects that have:

- Accelerated the number of Associate Degree graduates with weekend, evening, and 15 month to completion options
- Included non-traditional entry into the nursing profession by degree-holding career changers and underrepresented populations
- Provided graduate nurses a specialty post-graduate Certificate in Nursing Education
- Developed partnerships among community colleges and universities with Maryland Faculty Academy for Clinical Simulation (M-FAST) and Eastern Shore Faculty Academy (ES-FAM)
- Developed Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) programs utilizing a variety of strategies, distance and web-based technologies to increase the capacity for doctoral students in the State
- Created new simulation scenarios for statewide use, conserving resources and harnessing intellectual capital for shared links on multiple schools of nursing with reference to support of the NSP II
- Improved student retention rates and success in nursing programs with higher NCLEX pass rates on initial licensure examinations
- Supported new nursing programs, including several at Maryland's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), with the goal of increasing diversity of the nursing workforce and support for underrepresented minorities in faculty development

On an ongoing basis, MHEC staff conducts site monitoring visits to NSP II grant awardees to assist with and ensure program success in accordance with the approved project. In general, MHEC has found: compliance to program and budgetary agreements; reporting within the guidelines; measurable impact of programs and active mentoring of new faculty. A well-recognized State action coalition composed of nursing and industry leaders volunteering on subcommittees started in the fall of 2011 for implementation of the Institute of Medicine recommendations in The Future of Nursing Report (2010). Deans and Directors of Nursing Programs have provided strong leadership and collaborative oversight with clear investment in nursing education and the mission of NSP II.

NSP II Competitive Institutional Grants for FY 2013

For FY 2013, MHEC received eighteen proposals. The seven-member Evaluation Committee comprised of hospital nursing administrators, community college and university nursing

educators, licensure and policy leaders along with MHEC and HSCRC staff, reviewed all of the proposals and agreed to recommend funding for twelve of the eighteen requests for two to three year programs totaling \$4,395,261. See Table 1 for a listing of the recommended grant awardees for FY 2013.

The most highly recommended application was representative of diversity and faculty mentoring with an innovative partnership between the lead private institutions of higher learning, Sojourner- Douglass College and Morgan State University, an established HBCU. The second most highly recommended was a new doctorate program (DNP) specializing in rural health at the only public university on the Eastern Shore, Salisbury University, utilizing distance educational strategies for ease of access to advanced education. Several applications built on former program success increasing the representation of men to 25 percent in accelerated programs near military bases, doubling the number of seats available to doctoral students, advancing simulation and extending clinical faculty education to new hospital partners. Twenty-three Maryland educational institutions and hospital partners will be involved in the twelve proposed grants programs with two to three year time frames in FY 2013. With this cycle of grants, all 26 Maryland Schools of Nursing have participated in at least one of the NSP II grant cycles, indicative of inclusivity and diversity across the State of Maryland.

Attachment 1: Recommendations for Competitive Institutional Grant Awards for FY 2013

Recommendations

1. Based on selection by the Evaluation Committee, HSCRC staff recommends the Commission approve the twelve Competitive Institutional Grants listed in Table 1 for award in the funding amounts stated.
2. HSCRC staff recommends the Commission to direct MHEC staff to evaluate the current Competitive Institutional Grant program and recommend changes, as needed, to ensure maximum effectiveness in the final years of NSP II grant awards.
3. HSCRC staff recommends waiving the 60-day comment so that this recommendation is considered for final approval during this June Commission meeting.