

# PURPOSE

A statewide committee of nurse educators from all entry levels was committed to working with education and healthcare communities to create a highly educated workforce through academic partnerships and a seamless progression to improve access for underrepresented and economically disadvantaged students. The purpose of this group was to highlight growth in cooperative efforts among statewide nursing programs engaged in academic progression initiatives that encourage the implementation of best practices identified in the work of the Campaign for Action (2012).



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**Academic Progression  
in Nursing:  
A Pathway  
to the BSN Vision**



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# BACKGROUND

- Registered Nurses (RN) enter the profession from a variety of access points: licensed practical nurse progression programs; generic pre-licensure programs in diploma; associate degree programs; baccalaureate programs; accelerated baccalaureate programs for graduates of non-nursing disciplines; and entry-level master's programs.
- All entry points into the nursing profession contribute to the supply of RNs available to meet the nation's need for nursing care.
- Multiple studies report enhanced patient outcomes and lower mortality rates in hospitals with larger percentages of baccalaureate-prepared nurses, recommended that nurses achieve higher levels of education, through an educational system that promotes seamless academic progression to attain an 80% baccalaureate-prepared nursing workforce by 2020.

# METHODS

The committee embarked on a two-year journey to develop a roadmap towards academic progression in nursing. This group of nurse educators undertook a review of literature and models in other states to synthesize best practices and promote this outcome.

# RESULTS

In the fall of 2020, the committee produced an Academic Progression in Nursing Whitepaper, including recommendations for both academia and corporate nursing. This whitepaper has been endorsed by several statewide professional organizations as an adopted model for the state. Plans include to further share this document, not only in the state, but nationwide.

# NEXT STEPS

- Although this state has yet to meet the IOM's (2011) recommendation of an 80% BSN prepared workforce by the year 2020, as nurses, educators, and employers, we must continue to pursue the goal. Better access to state-wide data is necessary.
- The authors support the recommendation to establish an independent entity within the state government to collect and analyze workforce and economic data.
- Organizations must explore and support educational opportunities for ongoing academic progression to RN to BSN, Master of Science in Nursing, and doctoral degrees.
- Educators from all levels of undergraduate nursing need to embrace the call to advance our profession by adopting these recommendations as a means of continued collaboration.

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# AUTHORS

- Mary Jean Osborne**, DNP, RN, PAPIN Chair and Director Northampton Community College Nursing
- Marianne T. Adam**, PhD, RN, FNP, CNE, Associate Teaching Professor of Nursing, Campus Coordinator for Nursing, Penn State Schuylkill
- Janyce Collier**, MSN, MBA, RN, CNE, Director of Franklin County Career & Technology Center Practical Nursing Program
- Karen Goldschmidt**, PhD, MSN, RN, CNE, Associate Clinical Professor College of Nursing and Health Professions, Drexel University
- Cheryl B. Kreig**, MSN, BSN, RNC-OB, Nursing Program Director of Clearfield County Career and Technology Center
- Andrea Mann**, MSN, RN, CNE, Nursing Education Administrator, Nurse Educator
- Cynthia Glawe Mailloux**, PhD, RN, CNE, Professor and Chairperson Department of Nursing King's College
- Debbie Rahn**, EdD, MSN, RN Director of Reading Hospital School of Health Sciences
- Amy H. Ricords**, MEd, BSN, RN, NPD-BC, Director Professional Advancement PA-AC