

VA NURSING ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIP FOR GRADUATE EDUCATION: ENHANCING VETERAN HEALTHCARE THROUGH ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIPS

Susan Benware DNP, ANP-BC; Janet Campbell DNP ANP-BC; Leigh Montejo, DNP, FNP-BC; Ann Mosher, MPH, FNP-BC; Angela Richard-Eaglin, DNP, FNP-BC; Adrienne Small, DNP, FNP-C; Gwen Waddell-Schultz, MSN, RN-C, NE-BC; Michael Zychowicz, DNP, ANP, ONP, FAAN, FAANP.

Background: The Durham VA Health Care System (DVAHCS) and the Duke University School of Nursing (DUSON) have partnered in an academic training program to enhance the education and training of nurse practitioners in the primary care of adult and geriatric Veterans. This program, the VA Nursing Academic Partnership for Graduate Education (VANAP-GE), uses a multifaceted approach to meet its objectives which includes the incorporation of Veteran centric content and a Veteran specialty tract in DUSON curriculum, use of DVAHCS for the majority of clinical rotations for those students enrolled in the specialty tract, and the development of a year-long Adult Geriatric Nurse Practitioner (AGNP) residency at DVAHCS. This program was made possible through a 5 year funding period provided by the VA Office of Academic Affiliations(OAA) and is one of 7 VA facilities in the nation selected for this program.

Objectives: The objectives of the VANAP-GE program are to provide opportunities for education and practice innovations aligned with Veteran Care, to enhance the competencies of new AGNPs, to recruit, expand, and retain a clinically trained and experienced workforce of AGNPs, to enhance interprofessional collaborations and educational opportunities, and to increase Veteran access to excellent primary care services for Veterans at the local and national level.

Methods: A team of faculty and preceptors from DVAHCS and DUSON developed a Veteran centric curriculum for AGNP students and residents. The residency model that includes both clinical and didactic training was developed. This model incorporates multiple clinical rotations to enhance the development and learning interest of the residents. Didactic sessions include participation in grand rounds, interprofessional educational offerings, and presentations from VA Veteran program affiliates. In addition, symposiums in geriatric care, integrative medicine, and selected continuing education programs are offered. Students are informed of the program by DUSON faculty and follow a matriculation plan toward successful completion of a Master of Science in Nursing degree in the AGNP track at DUSON. Residents are recent AGNP graduates from any accredited program who are licensed and certified to practice as a nurse practitioner, but have not yet functioned in that role. Both students and residents may be eligible for a stipend provided by the OAA.

Results/Outcomes/Improvements: The program accepted its first cohort of students in Spring, 2016 and its first cohort of residents in Fall, 2017. Thirteen students have completed the Veteran centric tract and an additional 6 are currently in the program. Two AGNPs were accepted into the VANAP-GE residency program and scheduled to complete their residency in November, 2017. Both NP residents have been recruited by DVAHCS and will begin full time employment upon the completion of their residency.

Significance/Implications/Relevance: The significance of this program is the provision of a better prepared primary care provider available to function independently in providing services for the Veteran population. Increasing the availability of these providers will expand the Department of Veteran Affairs ability to provide comprehensive primary care services and to improve the overall quality of health and primary care services.