

West Virginia Nursing Leadership Institute Receives \$150,000 Grant to Expand Program.

A landmark program to address West Virginia's impending nursing shortage has received a boost from a \$150,000 grant from The Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation to expand its current program. The funding will be used to support the efforts of the West Virginia University School of Nursing-Charleston Division and the Charleston Area Medical Center Health Education and Research Institute to develop a Team Leadership Development Program for nurses from across West Virginia. The West Virginia Nursing Leadership Institute's Team Leadership Development Program will assist teams of nurses from throughout the state to build their skills in team leadership and effectiveness. This highly interactive 12 month program will allow team members to remain in their current positions, while gaining the experiences, insights, networking, competencies and skill enhancements necessary to effectively lead teams in the workplace and community.

With a nursing shortage threatening the quality of patient care and currently being felt in all sectors of West Virginia health care, investment in team leadership and effectiveness skills is essential.

Teamwork has positive effects in healthcare organizations, especially in enhancing quality and safety of care. This includes reducing medical errors, improving quality of patient care, addressing workload issues, building cohesion, and reducing burnout of health care professionals. Improved communication, partnerships, clarity on the role of all health care providers, improved coordination of health care services, and high satisfaction for health care providers and patients are outcomes of effective teamwork. Nurses who possess team work and leadership skills are sought for advancements in their career, enhancing their satisfaction, and influencing retention in the workplace.

Project Director Cynthia Persily, PhD, RN, FAAN welcomes the grant to expand the important efforts of the Institute. "The West Virginia Nursing Leadership Institute Team Leadership Development Program is a powerful solution to the challenge of leadership development in Nursing," Persily said. "The creation, training, and support of highly developed teams of nurses promises to be one of the most effective strategies for health care providers to improve the quality and safety of care for their patients. The additional impact of higher satisfaction for nurses and the retention of highly skilled team leaders in the workplace is obvious."

The program will be open to teams of 3-4 registered nurses who work in any rural or urban health care agency, including hospitals, long term care organizations, public health departments, primary care clinics, and schools of nursing. These teams will attend four intensive 2 day seminars in Charleston. Nationally and internationally respected faculty will partner with local experts to provide these onsite sessions. Intersession work includes web based assignments and team leadership projects designed to offer solutions to challenges within the home organization. Teams will receive ongoing support and mentorship from sponsors from the home organization and Institute faculty.

If you would like more information about the West Virginia Nursing Leadership Institute, call (304) 347-1207 or toll free 1-866-882-6270, e-mail wvnli@hsc.wvu.edu or visit the Institute's website at www.wvnli.org Program applications are being accepted through December 8, 2008.

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