Proposal for a Graduate Certificate

Adult Nurse Practitioner

Submitted
by the
School of Nursing
West Lafayette Campus
Title: Adult Nurse Practitioner Certificate Program

Level of Certificate: Post-Masters
Proposed date of initiation: Summer semester 2006

I. Purpose of the Program

This is a proposal by the School of Nursing for a graduate level, academic credit certificate in the Adult Nurse Practitioner program. The purpose of the program is to provide knowledge and experience in primary care to enable qualified advanced practice nurses to function as Adult Nurse Practitioners. This program will meet the need for an increase in the number of advanced practice nurses in medically underserved areas.

After demonstrating significant improvements through the 1990s, the state of Indiana’s health has stalled. A new national study (America’s Health: State Health Rankings, www.unitedhealthfoundation.org, 2004) reveals that Indiana tied with Delaware as the nation’s 18th unhealthiest state (23rd in 2003). The cancer death rate (207.9/100,000 population) is higher than the national average (www.in.gov/isdh/, 2002). In addition, the percentage of children in poverty increased from 11.3% in 2003 to 13.7% of persons under age 18 in 2004, and the number of limited activity days/month increased from 1.7 to 2.2. The total mortality rate has increased since 1990 from 909 to 928 deaths/100,000 population in 2002, with the major causes of death being diseases of the heart, malignant neoplasms, and cerebrovascular disease, along with diabetes, obesity, and mental illness (www.in.gov/isdh/, 2002). These conditions are compounded by the fact that the quality of rural healthcare in the U.S., and particularly Indiana as a predominately agricultural state, is influenced by such environmental factors as groundwater pollution, surface water pollution, pesticides and soil erosion, visible and non-visible air pollution, and noise pollution.

The federal government has designated 42 of the 92 Indiana counties as medically underserved areas. Although about 25% of the national population lives in rural settings, fewer than 13% of physicians practice in these areas. This leaves a void in providing primary care in rural areas that could be filled by adult nurse practitioners. The Purdue program’s emphasis on rural healthcare addresses the critical shortage of healthcare professionals in these rural and vulnerable communities.

There is an increasing demand for nurse practitioners in rural Indiana. The HRSA Work Force Profile published in 2000 reported that Indiana had 722 nurse practitioners. This was equal to 11.9 nurse practitioners per 100,000 population, substantially below the national rate of 33.7. In fact, Indiana had the lowest ratio of nurse practitioners per capita in the nation. Currently, there are 3,000 unfilled RN positions in the state of Indiana (Indiana Hospital Association, 2006) and over 50 nurse practitioner positions advertised.
in Central Indiana. The nurse practitioners in Indiana are also aging. There is a need for new graduate nurses prepared at the master’s level to replace the retiring nurses and to maintain the supply of advanced practice nurses in Indiana. Furthermore, with the other Indiana universities with graduate programs being in urban areas, and with 42 of the 92 Indiana counties designated by the federal government as medically underserved areas and 55 of the 92 counties designated as rural, the Purdue program’s emphasis on rural healthcare addresses the critical shortage of healthcare professionals in rural and vulnerable communities.

The Institute of Medicine study To Err is Human: Building a Safer Health System (2000) shocked the nation with its declaration that at least 44,000 and perhaps as many as 98,000 Americans die in hospitals each year as a result of medical errors. To meet the more complex demands of today's healthcare environment, the National Advisory Council on Nurse Education and Practice (NACNEP) has recommended that at least two-thirds of the basic nurse workforce hold baccalaureate or higher degrees in nursing by 2010 (NACNEP, 2001). This is supported by Linda Aiken, et al. (2003), whose study showed that quality of nursing care, including patient mortality, is directly related to the education levels of nurses.

The above factors have led to expanded opportunities for Adult Nurse Practitioners and have prompted nurses with master’s degrees to enter graduate programs that prepare nurses to function as Adult Nurse Practitioners. The proposed program will meet this need.

At least 20 inquiries have come to the School of Nursing regarding a certificate program over the past two years. The SON expects to admit four students to the program every year, starting in the summer of 2006.

It is anticipated that one-fourth to one-half of students working toward the ANP certificate may also be enrolled in the Doctor of Nursing Practice program. It will use the unique resources of Purdue University to deliver cost-effective, culturally appropriate, quality care in underserved rural areas and to vulnerable populations identified as high risk in national Healthy People 2010 (HP 2010) objectives.

II. Admission Requirements:

The admission process for the Adult Nurse Practitioner Certificate Program will parallel that for students seeking a Master’s Degree in Nursing. Specific requirements are:

1. Master’s degree in nursing from an accredited institution or admission and enrollment in a master’s program in nursing.
2. International students must graduate from a nursing program that has undergone comparable review and must score a minimum of 213 on the computer-based TOEFL exam.
2. Minimum graduate grade point average of 3.0, on a 4.0-point scale. Applicants who do not meet this criterion may be considered for conditional admission status.
3. Eligible for licensure as a registered nurse in the State of Indiana.
4. A minimum of one year or 1500 hours of experience as a registered nurse.
5. Curriculum vitae or resumé.
6. Three letters of recommendation, one from a clinical supervisor, one from an academic advisor or faculty member, and one from a nursing peer.
7. Personal interview with a graduate program faculty advisor.
8. A 300 – 350 word essay addressing the prospective student’s a) reason for pursuing graduate study in nursing, b) career goals, and c) research interests.
9. Successful (3.0 on a 4.0 point scale) completion of an undergraduate OR graduate statistics* course. The course must be taken within five years of matriculation into the program or concurrent with the first semester of graduate coursework.

*STAT 301, SOC 382, SOC 581. Methods of Social Research II. (3); STAT 501. Experimental Statistics I. (3). STAT 511. Statistical Methods. (3); PSY 500; or course deemed comparable by the School of Nursing Admissions Committee.

III. Completion Requirements

The total hours will vary depending on the student’s academic record, clinical experiences, and objectives. Students must complete a minimum of 15 credits. Typically a student will complete 15-28 hours of course credit.

Credit Hour Requirements:

The certificate requires students to complete 28 credit hours consisting of the following courses:

NUR 502** Pharmacotherapeutics in Primary Care 3
NUR 512** Clinical Applications in Pharmacotherapeutics 1
NUR 503* Advanced Health Assessment 3
NUR 507* Physiologic Concepts for Advanced Practice Nursing 4
NUR 513 Health Promotion in Special Populations 3
NUR 532 Acute Illness: Adult Health Practice 3
NUR 533 Acute Illness: Adult Health Preceptorship 3
NUR 542 Chronic and Commonly Recurring Conditions: Adult Health Practice 3
NUR 543 Chronic and Commonly Recurring Conditions: Adult Health Preceptorship 3
NUR 675*** Role Transition and Synthesis 2

*May be waived if student has taken a comparable course at Purdue University or another accredited nursing program within 5 years prior to application to this program.
**May be waived if student has taken a comparable course at Purdue University or another accredited nursing program within 3 years prior to application to this program.**  
***May be waived if student is presently practicing as a nurse practitioner in another specialty area.**

**GPA Requirements for Progression:**

Students must maintain a GPA of 3.0 and a B in all courses required for the certificate.

**Maximum number of credits that can be transferred from another institution:**

Students may transfer a maximum of 13 credits from another institution to fulfill requirements for NUR 502, NUR 512, NUR 503, NUR 507, and/or NUR 675.

No more than 12 credit hours can be earned in a non-degree status, including credit hours earned toward completion of a single certificate.

**Maximum number of credits from undergraduate-level courses that may be used for certificate:**

Students may not use any undergraduate credits toward the certificate in nursing.

**Maximum time to complete certificate:**

Students must complete the required courses within 3 years of admission to the certificate program.

**Number of credit hours taken prior to admission to the certificate program that may be applied toward certificate:**

Students may apply a maximum of 6 credit hours taken prior to admission to the certificate program.

**IV. Administration**

To certify completion of the certificate program requirements, the Director of Graduate Studies in Nursing and the Coordinator of the Adult Nurse Practitioner Program will:

1). Evaluate progress of all students enrolled in the certificate program annually.  
2). Forward the names of post-graduate students who have met the certification requirements to the Graduate School upon completion of the certification requirements.  
3). The School of Nursing will disseminate completion certificates received from the Registrar.