



Member Report on the Centralized Application Service (NursingCAS) Spring 2018

Since October 2017, the following activities have been initiated by AACN and Liaison International staff to support the centralized application service.

Current Operations: The 2017 – 2018 NursingCAS Application Cycle opened on August 23, 2017, and over 87,000 applications have been generated thus far. Operations are running very smoothly with an average processing time of 5 days. Since October 2017, 21 new schools have joined the service, bringing the total number of enrolled schools to 250. Several new enhancements were implemented, including a fee waiver program, full access to in-progress applicant data, and new searchable help centers for applicants and school users with improved instructions.

The 2018 – 2019 Application Cycle: The 2018 – 2019 NursingCAS Cycle will open on August 15, 2018. Due to AACN's advocacy, a major hurdle that has been an ongoing challenge for NursingCAS since its inception in 2010 has now been removed. In order to make annual updates and technology enhancements to the system, NursingCAS would shut down operations for a period of time. In 2017, we reduced the downtime so that the application was unavailable for only 5 days. This year, we have developed a **solution to eliminate downtime** between cycles by having a short duration of crossover time when both application cycles are open simultaneously. The 2017 – 2018 NursingCAS Cycle will remain open through mid-September, and processing will be extended as well. This solution will enable NursingCAS to keep the application open at all times and still maintain an annual cycle for data-reporting and operational efficiency. This change will be especially beneficial for participating programs with rolling admission periods and Spring Entry deadlines in September and October.

Outreach: Since October 2017, a variety of outreach activities have occurred to recruit and retain schools. NursingCAS sessions were held at AACN's Fall Meeting, Baccalaureate Conference, and Doctoral Education Conference. A NursingCAS presentation was held during the New Mexico Nursing Education Consortium's (NMNEC) Statewide meeting in November. Also in November, a NursingCAS session was held in conjunction with the Nursing Workforce Diversity Grantee Summit that focused on leveraging the system for facilitating a holistic admission review process. NursingCAS staff also participated in the annual virtual fair during Health Professions Week fielding over hundreds of questions from more than 500 prospective nursing students. AACN's NursingCAS Director, Caroline Kane, has lead 20 calls and conducted 5 site visits to assist schools with the implementation process for NursingCAS. This high level of outreach and engagement has reached over 250 individuals at 165 schools.

Growth Strategy: AACN would like to increase the number of participating schools to 60% of its membership by 2020, which will mark the 10th year of operation for NursingCAS. The platform and operations are stable. The technology is highly customizable and can accommodate any unique program's needs. NursingCAS has significant potential to positively influence policy and shape the future of academic nursing. In order to increase the web presence and search engine optimization efforts for NursingCAS, we are working on a website redesign, a new logo, and updated branding project to help drive prospective students, applicants, and schools to NursingCAS.