



## **Report on the Centralized Application Service (NursingCAS) March 2015**

Since October 2014 the following activities have been initiated by AACN and Liaison International staff to support the centralized application service. NursingCAS is a free benefit for AACN member schools and there is no cost for schools to participate in the service.

**Current Operations:** The NursingCAS 2.0 application closed down on February 15, 2015 with over 89,000 applicants utilizing the system over the span of 22 months. The new, NursingCAS 3.0 platform opened on October 15, 2014. Since the launch date, 15 new schools have joined, and interest continues to grow as a result of the improved functionality and ability to customize school listings on a per program basis. Several participating schools are expanding the numbers of programs posted on the application to include both graduate and undergraduate level degrees.

**What's Different about NursingCAS 3.0:** Schools can customize the design of their program home pages and the applicant's experience in a number of ways by:

- Branding with custom images and color schemes
- Adding instructional text to guide applicants and answer common questions
- Providing program details such as deadline, delivery, degree type, track, etc.
- Adding specific questions that applicants must answer
- Identifying documents applicants must submit to their program
- Configuring prerequisite courses so applicants can self-identify which of their coursework matches the program's prerequisites
- Identifying the type of transcripts (official, unofficial, none) required Indicating what type of coursework entry (full academic history, prerequisites only, none) is required for their programs

NursingCAS 3.0 also enables a continuous application cycle to better facilitate academic progression. Applicant records will be active for several years allowing students to easily carry their pre-existing data forward to apply to the next level of study. Based on user feedback from participating schools users and applicants, the biggest change is the ability for schools to now decide whether or not they will require applicants to complete data entry of their coursework.

**Outreach:** Since October 2014, staff and advisory group members have engaged in a variety of outreach activities to recruit new schools to the service, including:

***Presentations, Webinars, and Individual Meetings and Teleconferences:*** Presentations were conducted at AACN's Baccalaureate Education Conference, Doctoral Education Conference, and Master's Education Conference with over 200 people attending these sessions. Additionally, 7 Webinars have been conducted with over 70 registrants. NursingCAS staff exhibited at the National Organization for Associate Degree Nursing Convention in St. Louis, MO. Since the 2014 Fall Meeting, AACN staff has lead over 20

calls and 6 site visits to assist schools with the implementation process for NursingCAS by engaging with university stakeholders on how to successfully transition to the online service.

***Student Outreach:*** NursingCAS 3.0 provides a much improved, streamlined, and more interactive student experience. Prospective students and applicants have clear guidance on each program's unique admissions requirements including required pre-requisite coursework, deadline, term of entry, minimum GPA, degree requirements, and other important details. NursingCAS is fast becoming a primary source for applicants looking to view nursing admissions requirements for participating programs nationally. AACN is also working to release a robust, searchable nursing program directory for students to learn more about each participating program. The [www.nursingcas.org](http://www.nursingcas.org) student Website was updated as well to include new resources for applicants. The number of programs at all levels for applicants to select from on NursingCAS 3.0 is over 1400. And there are currently over 30,000 applicants utilizing the new system that was launched in mid-October 2014.

***June 2015 Open House:*** On June 11-12, 2015 AACN and Liaison will host its annual NursingCAS Open House and Enrollment Management Workshop in Boston, MA for prospective, new, and currently participating schools. This year's event will be held at Simmons College, and the keynote speaker is Dr. William Sedlacek, Professor Emeritus at the University of Maryland and noted expert on non-cognitive assessment and holistic admissions. This free workshop and open house is open to deans, admissions professionals, faculty, IT staff, nursing school recruiters, advisors, and other decisions makers involved in the nursing admissions process. This event will provide a great opportunity to explore operations first-hand and to hear from experienced enrollment management practitioners.