

Diversifying a School of Nursing in MS to Represent the Communities Served

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Topic: Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

Category: Quality Improvement/Evidence-Based Practice Project

Abstract

Background/Introduction

Increasingly, health inequities are being addressed by diversifying the nursing workforce to represent better the populations served. Despite slow improvements, the diversity of the nursing workforce lags behind the diversity of the United States population. Inclusive educational policies, procedures, and teaching practices should be adopted to recruit and retain the next generation of diverse faculty and students.

Purpose

This poster will detail initiatives of how the University of Mississippi Medical Center school of nursing focuses on recruiting faculty and students from rural, underrepresented, and otherwise disadvantaged backgrounds as a pathway for success to build a more inclusive population that represents the state of Mississippi.

Methods or Processes/Procedures

A multifaceted approach to recruiting underrepresented students through diversity, equity inclusion strategies, faculty affairs initiatives, tailored clinical experiences within the community, and student success initiatives.

Results

At UMMC SON the majority of faculty describe themselves as White (76%) and 24.2% identify underrepresented backgrounds [5% higher than national data]. Black or African American faculty at the SON increased 5.5% over a five-year period, and the number of male faculty has increased to 12.6%. Over the past five years, the SON has seen a significant increase in the Black or African American student demographic by 7%. In addition, the SON has made a concerted effort to increase the enrollment of male students, which currently is at 11.4%.

Limitations

Limitations in the improvement project were related to the population and communities that serve the school.

Conclusions/Implications for Practice

There is still a lack of diversity among registered nurses within the US. Nursing's student enrollment lack of diversity is the foundational cause of limited diversity in the nursing workforce. A multifaceted approach to recruiting underrepresented students will aid in recruitment efforts. The UMMC SON utilized this approach by increasing student demographic and continuing to analyze and remove structural barriers that lead to inequities in nursing education.

Biography

Dr. Joseph W. Tacy is the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at the University of Mississippi Medical Center SON. Dr. Tacy received his PhD in Nursing, from The University of Texas at Tyler, an MSN in Nursing Education from James Madison University, his Bachelor's Degree from West Virginia University, and an Associate in Nursing from Davis and Elkins College. Dr. Tacy has multiple years of telemetry medical-surgical, orthopedic, and administrative experience. Dr. Tacy has taught contemporary issues, informatics, health assessment, health policy, and clinical applications. Dr. Tacy has experience with administrative leadership, nurse administration, technology, and informatics.

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