

Strengthening Preceptor Recruitment and Retention Through Meaningful Benefit Strategies: A Quality Improvement Initiative

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Background

- More than 60% of nurse practitioner programs report significant difficulty securing clinical placement for students.
- Common barriers to precepting include time constraints, productivity demands, documentation burden, limited employer support, and preceptor burnout.
- Preceptors are primarily motivated by professional obligation, enjoyment of teaching, meaningful recognition, and strong academic-practice partnerships.
- Emerging evidence suggests that sustainable preceptor engagement requires more than traditional appreciation efforts and should include intentional organizational support, communication, and professional partnership strategies.

Purpose

- To develop and implement a sustainable preceptor support and recognition initiative informed by preceptor and faculty feedback to strengthen recruitment, engagement, and retention of clinical preceptors in graduate nursing education.

Objectives

- Identify preceptor perceived needs and desired benefits
- Explore current preceptor retention strategies used in other nurse practitioner programs
- Develop a structured preceptor benefits package
- Implement preceptor recognition initiatives
- Establish a framework for future evaluation of preceptor engagement and strategies

Assessment Plan

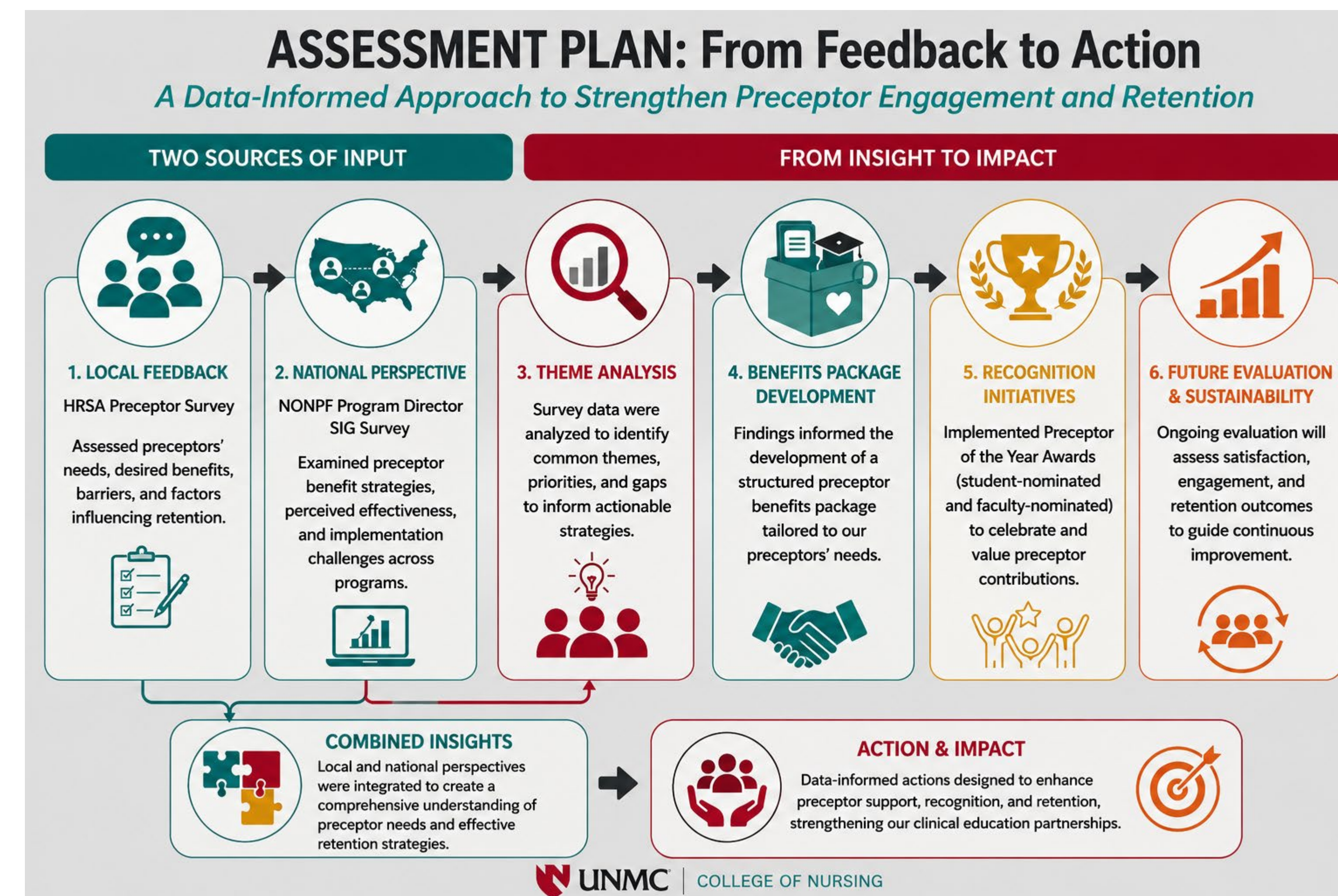


Figure 1. Assessment plan for development of a preceptor support and retention initiative. Created using generative AI assistance (OpenAI, 2026).

Assessment Findings

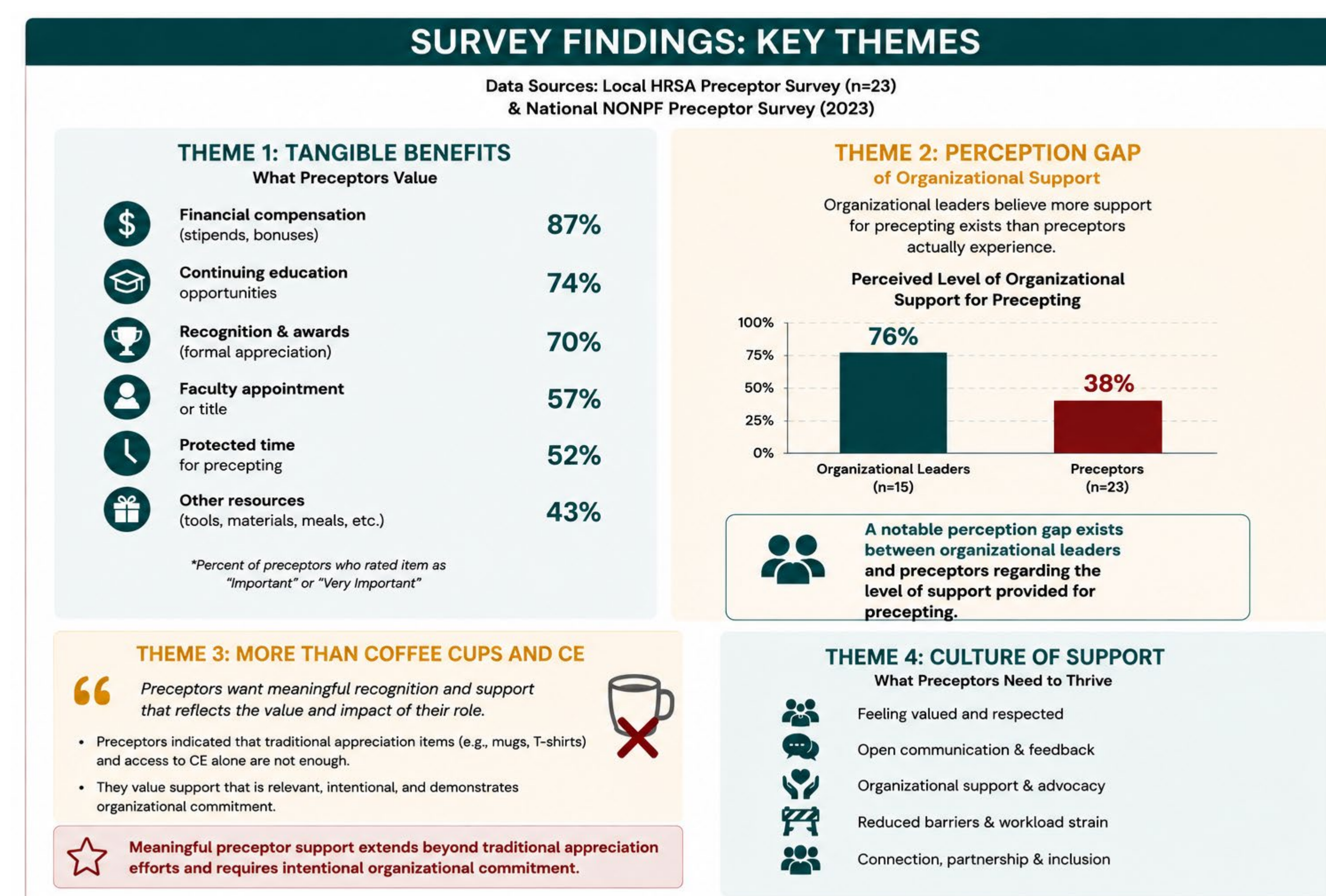


Figure 2. Summary of key survey findings related to preceptor engagement, support, and retention. Developed with generative AI assistance using ChatGPT (OpenAI, 2026).

Implementation Plan

Implementation Status

- Preceptor of the year award implemented Spring 2026
- Preceptor benefits package planned Fall 2026 implementation
- Professional development and Evaluation strategies planned for development and then phased implementation Fall 2026

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

A Comprehensive Approach to Strengthen Preceptor Engagement & Retention



Figure 3. Implementation framework for preceptor engagement and retention initiatives. Developed with generative AI assistance using ChatGPT (OpenAI, 2026).

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Biography

Amy L. Ford, DNP, APRN-NP, WHNP-BC, is Associate Professor, MSN Program Director, and Interim DNP Program Director at the University of Nebraska Medical Center College of Nursing. She is a Women's Health Nurse Practitioner with over 19 years of clinical experience and has served as a nurse educator at UNMC since 2008. Dr. Ford maintains clinical practice in women's health at All Care Health Center, where she continues to care for underserved populations.

Dr. Ford's academic and leadership work focuses on graduate nursing education, competency-based education, clinical reasoning development, preceptor engagement, telehealth education, and innovative teaching strategies in nurse practitioner education. She coordinates and teaches advanced health assessment across the lifespan and mentors DNP students leading quality improvement, evidence-based practice, and program evaluation projects. Several student-led projects under her mentorship have resulted in regional presentations, publications, and award recognition.

She is actively involved in national nursing education organizations, including the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties and the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, and currently serves on the NONPF Preceptor Committee. Dr. Ford has contributed to national initiatives focused on distance education, competency-based education, faculty development, and integration of innovative technologies into nurse practitioner education.

Dr. Ford has presented regionally and nationally on topics including artificial intelligence in health assessment education, telehealth assignments, student engagement, simulation, and women's health. Her scholarly interests include workforce development, educational innovation, preceptor support, and improving student learning outcomes within graduate nursing education.

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