

**Duke Advancement of Nursing, Center of Excellence (DANCE) Academic-Practice Partnership  
Duke University School of Nursing (DUSON) and  
Duke University Health System (DUHS)**

The Duke University School of Nursing and the Duke University Health System have, for the past 30 years, engaged in common initiatives to support the art, scholarship, and practice of nursing. The relationship between the university and health system has historically fluxed between the parallelism of traditional work-school benefits and more sophisticated joint sponsorship of practice-based science. In the Fall of 2014 the relationship evolved and changed to align strategic goals and form a partnership. The vision for this partnership, known as the Duke Advancement of Nursing, Center of Excellence (DANCE) is to be a recognized leader in the development of professional nurses across the career continuum, from students through professional clinical practice, research, and education roles at Duke University Health System.

The mission of the DANCE is to support and advance the knowledge, skills, and professional opportunities for all nurses across Duke; that is, the Duke University School of Nursing (DUSON) and the Duke University Health System (DUHS). The DANCE is grounded in a partnership between the university and the school, and leverages the experience, knowledge, and mutual trust and respect that exists among nurses across both entities. Nurses across the enterprise are committed to personal professional advancement and the concept of lifelong learning for all in order to advance the health of the community. Professional identity formation and sustainment of leadership by nurses to address the challenges of promoting a healthier community lies at the heart of the DANCE academic-practice partnership. This partnership enables DANCE to pursue and achieve the overall goal of providing an infrastructure that promotes collaboration, synergy, and co-production of improved patient care outcomes through the work of nurses at every point on the career continuum.

The foundation of DANCE is built on commitment to two major pillars of growth: (1) lifelong learning and (2) evidence-based practice, research, and innovation. The vision for the first pillar (lifelong learning) is to nurture a learning environment for students and nurses to promote professional practice both now and in the future. The second pillar (EBP and research) focuses on the generation and implementation of knowledge to support evidence-based practice for nurses, as well as integration of collaborative scholarship and research in both the academic setting and the practice environment. These two pillars align with the current missions of DUSON, DUHS, and the DUHS Nursing Professional Practice Model, encompassing a commitment to patient-centered care excellence. In addition, these pillars are aligned with the developing Duke Health Strategic Plan, which includes the five areas of patient care, research, education, community health improvement, and global health.

In May, DUHS submitted the application to be recognized as an NLN Center of Excellence in Academic Progression for Nurses. To advance and promote lifelong learning of nurses employed at DUHS, the DANCE academic-practice partnership developed a *Nursing Career Development Exposition* to provide guidance on professional development and academic progression. The first expo took place in June of 2016, and included a question and answer forum with a panel of experts. Further, thirteen schools from around the state of North Carolina were present, allowing employees to visit booths and gain more information from a variety of schools. Almost 200 nurses attended this event who exhibited excitement and interest in progressing their career through advanced education. Evaluations regarding these nurses' experience are currently being assessed, with preliminary data showing positive feedback. One participant stated "It was a wonderful collaboration between DUHS and DUSON." Follow-up evaluations of the nurses' future plans will also be assessed at 90 days, 6 months, and one year.

Further, in April 2016, faculty members of DUSON, with support from leadership and the Center for Nursing Research, developed an innovative forum to help fund research ideas, known as the DUSON Shark Pool. This event served as an avenue for nurse researchers, educators, and practitioners to pitch their research ideas to receive money to fund their work. As a result, two team which included members from both facilities received \$2,000 in seed money to fund their research interests.

Beginning in early 2016, the DANCE academic-practice partnership formed a subgroup to develop the Duke Nursing Extern program for accelerated BSN students at DUSON, with an anticipated start date of Fall 2016. The aim of this program is to provide students with opportunities to gain clinical experience as they provide care to patients and families served by the DUHS in the role of a nursing assistant, to become more familiar with the mission, vision, and values of the DUHS, and to earn a salary while in nursing school.

Further, a Teaching Conversations series is accredited and co-sponsored between DUHS and DUSON's Institute for Educational Excellence. Teaching Conversations are an ongoing series of informal sessions, facilitated by DUSON faculty or other experts from Duke, that are designed to share educational innovations, strengthen teaching strategies, or address common issue experienced by faculty or nurses. Each Teaching Conversation includes a brief presentation of the topic, which is followed by informal discussion among the participants (faculty from DUSON, graduate students, and nurse educators from DUHS or other settings). All Teaching Conversations are made available via live streaming to those who wish to participate from a distance, and all are recorded so that they can be accessed by faculty and other members of the Duke community at a later date.

Additional collaborative initiatives include a joint clinical instructor and preceptor source, open to both DUHS and DUSON. The Center for Nursing Research at DUSON also offers office hours, including assistance with research design, statistics, and IRB submission, to both DUHS and DUSON nurses. A faculty member of DUSON also provides advice to DUHS's strong Nurse Residency Program. Additionally, DUHS has received funding from HRSA to support nurses wishing to conduct research, which was supported by DUSON from proposal to closeout. One such project was entitled *Inter-professional Team Development in Rural Community Hospitals* presented at the Inter-Professional Health Care Summit by Dr. Pamela Edwards and Jean Rea of DUHS. Finally, a well-developed communication plan exists between the two entities, with both settings receiving each other's' monthly newsletters to stay abreast of current events and initiatives.