

In 2007, the Northeast Region VA Nursing Alliance (NERVANA) was founded. NERVANA is an academic-practice partnership between the VA Boston/Bedford Health Care Systems and six schools of nursing which include: Boston College, Northeastern University, Regis College, Simmons College, University of Massachusetts Boston and University of Massachusetts Lowell. NERVANA's mission, derived from the VA's parent mission is as follows: "To employ an innovative educational model to expand and enrich nursing students and faculty, to educate nursing students in the care of veterans, and to expose nursing students to the advanced model of medical informatics, patient safety, quality improved and integrated systems of care employed by the VA's National Healthcare System". Although the NERVANA schools are among some of the most prestigious in the nation and located in the heart of a healthcare mecca, none is a component of an academic medical center. Thus, this consortium offers unique opportunities both for the schools and the VA Boston/Bedford alike. Goals for NERVANA are in congruence with the guiding principles for Academic –Practice Partnerships developed by AACN and AONE. The VA system provides the most comprehensive healthcare system in the country and therefore provides an experience to students and residents unlike any other they have had in their clinical experiences.

Goals for NERVANA include:

1. Maintain and refine the infrastructure for sustaining the mission and supportive activities of NERVANA.
2. Increase the number of faculty to teach in nursing programs and NERVANA.
3. Create and expand novel clinical rotations including intra-professional (DEU) Dedicated Education Units (IDEU) for BSN programs, APN rotations for MSN and DNP students, and EBP/Research opportunities for DNP and PHD students interested in the care of veterans.
4. Continue creation of VA pedagogical project initiatives (i.e. patient safety DVD project)
5. Educate students, faculty, and the community regarding the uniqueness of the health needs of the veteran population.
6. Develop programs at partnering schools to address healthcare issues related to the Veteran (i.e. Care of the American Veteran Colloquia Series).
7. Create multi-school research, EBP, and other scholarship/research opportunities for and with NERVANA partners.
8. Translate learning to develop best practices for veterans in all healthcare settings.
9. Collaborative development, implementation and evaluation of residency programs.
10. Establish and maintain a PBNR program and achieve CCNE accreditation.

Many medical, health professions and engineering affiliations overlap NERVANA affiliations, thus providing all trainees and providers the opportunity to work together in teams in delivering care and learning from each other. This interprofessional relationship across academic affiliates and professions enhances the exchange of ideas and is a major source of strength of the VA rotations, an example of which is the Northeastern/VA Interprofessional Dedicated Education Unit.

Some NERVANA outcomes include the following:

- Developed identification/hiring process for VA Based Faculty.
- Biannual NERVANA clinical faculty workshop series developed by Academic Partners with both academic and practice clinical speakers. (Growing as a Mentor Educational Program series)
- Developed faculty education and support processes.
- Identified and organized ongoing clinical placements with clinical affiliation coordinators of NERVANA resulting in approximately a 200% Increase in nursing student rotations.
- Developed marketing, promotional, and educational materials for NERVANA.
- Presented over 20 posters/lectures throughout the US on NERVANA.
- Developed Bi-annual Colloquia Series “Care of the American Veteran” beginning in 2009, which are hosted by one of the six NERVANA colleges on a rotating schedule.
- New Curricular Initiatives such as Patient Safety; Post Baccalaureate Nurse Residency (funded grant) in process, RFP pending on MH NP Residency.
- CSI VHABHS grant “Virtual Patient Safety Rounds”.
- Several academic staff appointed as intermittent nurse scientists.
- Research proposal pending studying the effect of the DEU with Simmons on students/staff
- Post-Baccalaureate Nurse Residency grant recipient, CCNE onsite accreditation review completed October 2014 accreditation Spring 2014.
- Advance Practice Mental Health Nurse Residency grant with Boston College.

VA Boston and its academic partners take great pride in sharing our mutual expertise and the value of the importance of imparting time with the future nurses of America as well as sharing the important work VA provides to our veteran population. This collaborative approach provides a rich environment in which PBNR Residency can flourish as well as other unique initiatives. This partnership has created and opened up vistas for both our academic partners and VA in ways we could not have envisioned back in 2007. It works because we have a shared vision to create the best that academics and practice have to offer and provides a natural platform for research and evidence-based practice. We were “Joining Forces” before it became a national goal. Our commitment serves as a blueprint for others and demonstrates the best of the best these partnerships have to offer. NERVANA truly is “NIRVANA” – a profound piece of mind that our future nurses are in great hands.

**NERVANA (Northeast Regional VA Nursing Alliance)
Academic-Practice Partnerships
Partnership Expectation and Outcome Metrics Worksheet**

Partnership Goals	Activities	Outcomes
<i>PP & AP representatives mutually establish partnership goals</i>	<i>PP nurse liaison & designated AP faculty collaboratively plan & implement the partnership activities</i>	<i>PP & AP representatives mutually establish target outcomes thresholds</i>
1-Maintain and refine the infrastructure for sustaining the mission, and supportive activities of NERVANA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biannual Steering Committee meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representatives from Each of the NERVANA schools attend and VA representatives from both Boston and Bedford • Minutes • attendance
2-Increase the number of faculty to teach in nursing programs and NERVANA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff members approved for NERVANA Faculty positions per academic semester pending immediate supervisor permission • Bi-annual Growing as a Mentor series • Preceptor Workshop 	<p>NERVANA Faculty academic year 2009-2013 Boston -63 clinical rotations with undergraduate students Bedford-17 clinical rotations with undergraduate students Growing As A Mentor Series</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring 2014-Building Emotional Intelligence-keynote: Regis College • Fall 2013 Nursing Leadership and Quality Management-keynote: VA Boston and Regis College • Spring 2013- Nurse of the Future Competencies Keynote: VA Boston and Simmons College • Fall 2012-Cultural Competency; Honoring Differences in the Learning Environment • Keynote: Northeastern University, Simmons College and VA Boston • Spring 2012-Reflective Practice, Evaluation and Assessing Outcomes-Keynote: Simmons College • Fall 2011-Translating Preceptorship into Practice-Keynote: Simmons College • Spring 2011- Quality Clinical Evaluations-Keynote: Regis College • Fall 2010-Time Management, Prioritizing and Ethical Decision Making: Keynote: Boston College, VA Boston, Simmons College and Regis College <p>Eight hour Preceptor Workshop offered for BSN staff member interested in precepting RN Residents/New RN Employees/Nursing Students Monthly Preceptor Development Seminar to discuss current issues regarding precepting.</p>

		<p>Panel Presentation on VA Nurses as Adjunct Faculty (Barbieri) NOVA Annual Conference, San Francisco, CA, June 2013</p>
<p>3-Create and expand novel clinical rotations including intra-professional and interprofessional Dedicated Education Units for BSN programs, APN rotations for MSN and DNP students, and EBP/research opportunities for DNP and PhD students interested in the care of veterans.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two Acute Care Dedicated Education Units- Simmons College successfully implemented (Spring 2011) • Interprofessiona I DEU- successfully implemented with Northeastern University (Summer 2013) • Dedicated Education Unit - Regis College successfully implemented (Spring 2014) • Dedicated Education Unit, Community Level/Palliative Care/Transition Care Units successfully implemented - Simmons College (Spring 2014) • Bedford VA successfully implemented DEU with UMA Boston (Spring 2014) 	<p>Evaluation by/of students/faculty Debriefing with both clinical instructors and college faculty</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning DEU with Boston College on Acute Care unit (Fall 2014) 	
<p>4-Continue creation of VA pedagogical project initiatives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSI VHABHS grant “Virtual Patient Safety Rounds” • Virtual Patient Safety education program developed and shared 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distributed nationwide at QESN Conference • Shared with local nursing programs • Presented at NERVANA Colloquia Series on Care of the American Veteran: Virtual Patient Safety Rounds • Innovations in Patient Safety” (Vessey, Brogan) MARN Spring Conference: “Innovations in Education” Norwood, MA, April 27, 2012. • CSI (Clinical Safety Investigation): Virtual Patient Safety Rounds” (Vessey, Bellino, P. Olivieri, R. Olivieri, Furlong & Cebulski) Charting the Course, 2011 QESN national Forum, Milwaukee, WI, June 2011. • CSI (Clinical Safety Investigation) VA: Virtual Patient Safety Rounds (Vessey, Bellino, P. Olivieri, R. Olivieri, Furlong, & Cebulski) Conference on Enhancing Nursing Undergraduate Teaching and Learning in the Clinical Setting: What Do We Know and How Do We Move Forward? Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Arlington, VA, October, 2010.
<p>5-Educate students, faculty, and the community regarding the uniqueness of the health needs of the veteran population.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop programs at partnering schools to address healthcare issues related to the Veteran <p>Develop programs at partnering schools to address healthcare issues related to the Veteran</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care of American Veteran series (initiated 2009) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -biannual program -rotation onsite to the 6 NERVANA schools -Topics specific to Veteran issues addressed by VA expert speakers 	<p>Spring 2009- Traumatic Brain Injury and Spinal Cord Injury-Boston College Fall 2009-PTSD-Simmons college Spring 2010-Homelessness-UMA Boston Fall 2010-Supporting Caregivers of Veterans with Dementia-Regis College Spring 2011-Military Sexual Trauma-UMA Lowell Fall 2011-Virtual Patient Safety Rounds-Northeastern University Spring 2013-Palliative Care Team-Boston College Fall 2014 – Women Veterans Health Care Issues-Simmons College</p>

<p>6-Create multi-school research, EBP, and other scholarship/research opportunities for and with NERVANA partners.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research Proposal pending studying the effect of the DEU initiative with Simmons College on Students/staff 2. Several academic staff appointed as intermittent nurse scientists 3. Clinical site for Doctoral students 4. Development of Evidence Based Practice Curriculum for Post-Baccalaureate Nurse Residency Program 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Awaiting IRB approval 2. NERVANA School Faculty with VA appointment 3. Regis College Doctoral Candidate Capstone experience "Perioperative Student Nurse Experience" (Barbieri) involving students from other NERVANA schools. Perioperative Student Nurse Experience" (Barbieri) MARN Spring Conference: "Innovations in Education" Norwood, MA April 27, 2012 "Perioperative Student Nurse Experience" (Barbieri) 59th AORN Conference, New Orleans, LA, March 24-30, 2012. 4. 12 month Post-Baccalaureate Nurse Residency curriculum meets formally once a month regarding Evidence Base practice project with faculty/and or VA Chief Librarian. Mentored by VA Boston Nursing Research Committee
<p>7-Translate learning to develop best practices for veterans in all healthcare settings.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presentation invitations/Poster invitations 2. Office of Academic Affiliations; approval for funding for pilot Post-Baccalaureate Nurse Residency(PBNR) Program 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "NERVANA: Achieving Academic Nirvana" (Beal) NOVA Annual conference, San Francisco, CA, June, 2013. <p>"NERVANA: Achieving Academic Nirvana" (McVey & Beal) MITTEN Conference VA Nursing Academy, Milwaukee, WI, May 2012.</p> <p>Using Technology to Enhance Academic and Service Relationships" (McVey & Vessey) Executive Nurse Leader Conference, Boston, MA June, 2011</p> <p>NERVANA: Creating an Academic-Practice Partnership Model NIRVANA" (McVey, Vessey, Beal & Watterson-Dorio)</p> <p>Conference on Enhancing Nursing Undergraduate Teaching and Learning in the Clinical Setting: What Do We Know and How Do We Move Forward? Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Arlington, VA, October, 2010.</p> <p>"NERVANA: Achieving Academic Nirvana" (McVey) VA Nursing Academy Transformation and Innovation through Nursing Academic Partnerships National Conference, Chicago, IL, August, 2010.</p> <p>"NERVANA" (Dorleans) Conference for Nurse Educators. St Anslem College, Hyannis, MA, June, 2012.</p> <p>"NERVANA" (Wendt & Dorleans) Conference for Nurse Educators. St. Anslem College, Hyannis, MA, June, 2011.</p>

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<p>8-Collaborative Development, implementation and evaluation of Residency Programs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NERVANA academic and practice partners collaborated to develop and implement a 12 month Post-Baccalaureate Nurse Residency program • NERVANA academic and practice partners collaboratively working on evaluation of PBNR and implementing improvement of program • NERVANA academic and practice partners collaboratively prepared for Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education accreditation of PBNR on site visit on October 23, 2014. • NERVANA academic and practice partners collaborated on submitting RFP for a Mental Health Nurse Residency program 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhance recruitment of BSN new graduates 2. Enhance retention of all VA nursing staff 3. Facilitate evidence based practice projects on the unit level amongst nursing staff

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