A Twelve Year Look Back:
The University of Pennsylvania Nursing Academic-Practice Partnership

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Objectives

- To understand the importance of a nursing development shared vision between a school of nursing and a hospital system and the resultant long term outcomes.
The Importance of Partnership

- A-P partnerships: formal relationships between academic and service organizations

- A-P partnerships create dynamic exchanges to promote evidence-based practice and practice-based evidence

- Leading nursing organizations call for partnership to strengthen the nursing profession:
  - American Association of the Colleges of Nursing (AACN) released position statement over 20 years ago, followed by:
    - American Organization of Nurse Executives (AONE)
    - National League of Nursing (NLN)
    - University HealthSystem Consortium
Inputs from Partnering Organizations

♦ Partnership champions
♦ Compatible philosophies
♦ Common vision
♦ Key stakeholder commitment
♦ Formalized partnership agreements
♦ Shared goals and accountabilities
♦ Dedicated time and resources

ELEMENTS THAT PROVIDE THE FOUNDATION FOR SUCCESS
Expected Outcomes

- Strengthen education
- Improve practice
- Advance science
WHAT DOES PARTNERSHIP LOOK LIKE AT PENN?

University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing (SoN)  

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University of Pennsylvania Health System (PM)
Precursors to Partnership

- Penn’s shared mission: enhance nursing practice, education, and research

- Drs. Meleis and Rich’s shared goal: create structures that enable exchange
Deliberately Constructed Roles

- Clinical, educational, administrative, and scientific roles create partnership champions
  - Clinician educators: practice, conduct research, and teach
  - Jointly appointed administrators
  - Penn Medicine (PM) clinical nurses as educators:
    - Adjunct faculty
    - Lecturers
    - Clinical instructors
    - Preceptors
  - Nurse scientists with adjunct appointments
- Creates connection across settings
- Assigns shared accountabilities
- Reflects agreement to dedicate resources
Connected Clinicians Share Values

Three central core values:

1. Recognize the importance of educating and developing the future and current nursing workforce

2. Acknowledge the need for evidence-based practice that supports the delivery of safe, efficient, and equitable care

3. Cultivate a spirit of inquiry that advances nursing science
Strengthening Nursing Education

♦ Goal: Provide rich educational experiences that reflect real-world clinical practice

♦ Activities to achieve goal:
  • PM hospitals serve as preferred clinical placement sites
  • PM clinicians engage in educating Penn students
  • SoN develops undergraduate curriculum collaboratively

♦ Outcomes:
  • 1,200+ nursing students receive clinical education at PM hospitals; most are Penn students
  • 6 senior level nurses hold joint appointments; nurses at all levels—CNO through clinical nurses—work w/ students
  • Revised undergraduate curriculum approved; collaborative workgroup assesses curriculum regularly
Supporting Nurses’ Professional Development

- **Goal:** Ensure graduates’ smooth transition to practice; promote lifelong learning for nurses at all levels

- **Activities to achieve goal:**
  - Continue collaboration to support nurse residency (NR)
  - PM leaders strengthen competency program collaboratively
  - Joint support of PM tuition reimbursement program

- **Outcomes:**
  - 1,850 NR graduates since 2002, 96.2% 1-year retention, 58% NR graduates currently employed at PM
  - Health system-wide task force convened including SoN consultant members
  - 700 PM nurses receive tuition reimbursement every year, $4M annually
Enhancing Interprofessional Education

- **Goal**: Increase interprofessional (IP) education opportunities for nurses and nursing students

- **Activities to achieve goal**:
  - PM and SoN leaders partner with local organizations to develop and teach IP simulation course
  - SoN and School of Medicine offer IP course on quality and safety to PM clinicians and nursing/medical students

- **Outcomes**:
  - Shared costs among Philadelphia-area partners to build capacity for simulation education
  - Simulation course receives consistently high evaluations
  - Local simulation consortium under development
  - 70 PM clinicians participated in university course and conducted QI projects within PM as course requirement
Cultivating Inquiry, Expanding EBP, Advancing Science

- **Goal:** Use research to inform practice and practice to inform research

- **Activities to achieve goal:**
  - Continue to support joint appointments
  - PM nurse scientists collaborate with SoN partners
  - Sustain collaborative relationships that support strategic initiatives

- **Outcomes:**
  - Clinician educators have led efforts to translate their research into practice at PM
  - SoN faculty and PM nurse scientists conduct research collaboratively
  - $1.5M grant awarded to support geriatric practice initiative at PM; relationships built through steering committee that included SoN geriatric faculty
Improving Health

- **Goal:** Improve the health of communities
- **Activities to achieve goal:**
  - Sustain collaborative relationships to support SoN’s local PACE program (LIFE). Dr. Rich is a board member.
  - Jointly support community outreach in Philadelphia
  - Jointly support global health initiatives through Botswana-UPenn partnership
- **Outcomes:**
  - LIFE achieved Pathways to Excellence designation
  - $250,000 raised to support community-based health initiatives; community education events held annually
  - 45 SoN students, 83 PM staff have participated in Botswana partnership; HIV, TB, and/or cervical cancer treatment and screening to 2,000+ patients and education to nearly 600 healthcare workers
Reflecting on this Work

♦ Dr. Rich: What have been the lessons learned, biggest challenges, and greatest successes of developing and sustaining an A-P partnership?

♦ Dr. Rao: How has learning and working in an environment with a robust A-P partnership impacted your experience as a student and employee?