

## **New Era report recommendation: *Enhance the Clinical Practice of Academic Nursing***

In 1951, the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) became the first public institution in Illinois to offer a curriculum leading to a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. Today, over 1,500 students are enrolled in our BSN, MSN, DNP, and PhD programs.

The New Era report responded to a call to action to identify strategies for academic nursing to participate in healthcare transformation.<sup>1,2</sup> The UIC College of Nursing faculty play an integral role in clinical practice at our academic health center (AHC), the University of Illinois Hospital and Health Sciences System (UI Health), comprised of a 495-bed hospital, 23 clinics, and 12 federally qualified health centers (FQHCs). We have sustained a decades-long partnership with UI Health, with coordination of faculty practice contracts led by the College's Associate Dean for Practice and Community Partnerships.

UI Health Nursing shares employment of a faculty member as their Director of Research and Evidence-Based Practice and coordinator of the hospital's AACN Nurse Residency Program. A nursing faculty member is Director of Palliative Care for the Cancer Center and co-leader of the Cancer Prevention and Control Program. Over 25 faculty members are credentialed and privileged as APRNs with appointments as UI Health Medical Staff Affiliates. They practice and precept our students in midwifery, primary, acute, and specialty care settings. Additionally, UI Health employs approximately 200 APRNs who each hold an Adjunct Clinical faculty appointment in the College of Nursing. These APRNs are the primary source of preceptors for students in our nine APRN specialty tracks.

The College has operated an academic nurse-managed clinic for more than 20 years. Its innovative model of integrated mental health care was recognized as an Edge Runner in 2012 by the American Academy of Nursing for achieving successful patient outcomes. In response to the evolution of healthcare delivery models and accountable care, college leadership transitioned our clinic to FQHC status in 2014. Now under the UI Health umbrella, federal support assures patient care is provided regardless of ability to pay and maximizes financial reimbursement. Our Center serves Chicago's Humboldt Park community, a Primary Care Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) and Chicago Central Mental Health HPSA. Since 2017, faculty have secured over 3 million dollars in federal and non-profit grant funding for Center initiatives. Primary care and psychiatric nurse practitioners provide comprehensive, integrated primary, pediatric, and behavioral health care, including medication-assisted treatment of opioid use disorder. In 2020, at the height of the pandemic, staff completed more than 6,000 patient visits by quickly transitioning primary and mental health care to telehealth. The Center was designated a Protect Chicago Plus site, the city's initiative to provide vaccinations to communities most impacted by COVID-19, especially Black and Latinx, and administered more than 4,000 vaccine doses in six weeks.

Our faculty are fully engaged as clinical practice partners of UI Health. This integration supports our College of Nursing's mission to transform health, health care, and policy, as well as UI Health's mission to promote health equity and improve the health of their patients and the communities they serve.<sup>3</sup>

## References

1. American Association of Colleges of Nursing. Advancing healthcare transformation: A new era for academic nursing. March 1, 2016. Accessed May 27, 2021. <https://www.aacnnursing.org/Portals/42/Publications/AACN-New-Era-report.pdf>.
2. Glazer G, Sharp-McHenry L. Legislative. Advancing healthcare transformation: A New Era for Academic Nursing. *Online J Issues Nurs*, 2017;22(2). doi: 10.3912/OJIN.Vol22No02LegCol01.
3. UI Health. Mission, vision and values. 2021. Accessed May 27, 2021. <https://hospital.uillinois.edu/about-ui-health/mission-vision-and-values>