

Case Study Higher Education

University Medical Center /
Academic Program

Bridging Program: Technical (Diploma) to Bachelor Degree in Nursing (BSN)

BACKGROUND

The healthcare system is facing a major challenge in improving the knowledge, skills, and competencies of nurses. The nursing profession continues to be transformed in scope and complexity due to the high acuity and chronically ill patients. Employers are demanding to employ bachelor-degreed nurses who are better prepared in caring for patients with complex health conditions. Hospitals are demanding that nurses have better communication, critical thinking, clinical reasoning, and leadership skills than those with technical skills. Hospitals employing BSN-degreed nurses are reported to provide better patient outcomes, including lower mortality rates and higher rates of correct nursing diagnoses, and less incidents of medical errors and improved patient safety.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Client Challenges

A university medical center (UMC) located in Lebanon included many diploma nurses among its clinical staff, and has been facing the following issues:

- The UMC reported a shortage of adequate number of BSN-degreed nurses who could meet their needs
- There was a high degree of dissatisfaction among Diploma-degreed nurses due to their limited scope of practice
- The high turnover of nursing staff created an enormous cost to the hospital and jeopardized the safety of patients
- There was an absence of Diploma (TS – Superior Technician) to BSN bridging programs

Our Solution

- Developed the Diploma/TS to BSN curriculum
- Integrated and Launched BSN Bridging Program in School of Nursing.
- Recruited faculty for the program and providing them with training
- Provided ongoing support for faculty development

Our Intervention's Impact

Educational and Professional Development

- Increased the number of BSN-degreed nurses
- Improved patient satisfaction rates in partnering hospitals
- Reduced cost by improving quality of care
- Decreased errors and improved safety of patient care
- Provided Diploma/TS prepared nurses a cost-effective, timely and transparent pathway to BSN completion
- Increased satisfaction of nurses
- Decreased turnover of nurses

- **Reduced cost by improving quality of care**
- **Improved patient satisfaction rates in partnering hospitals**

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Key Client Challenge

Hospitals are demanding that nurses have better communication, critical thinking, clinical reasoning, and leadership skills than those with technical skills.

Our Solution

Academic Advisory Services

- Market Assessment

- Reviewed Diploma/TS programs and curricula offered in the region to determine gaps in knowledge, skills and competencies
- Surveyed area hospitals to determine needs for the program

- Program Development

- Established Diploma/TS to BSN curriculum committee to develop the program
- Established BSN Bridging program goals and learning outcomes
- Developed the Diploma/TS to BSN curriculum
- Developed hybrid intensive courses that met the needs of the working nurses
- Obtained approval from the Ministry of Education and higher Education to implement the program

- Program Management

- In consultation with program faculty members, developed criteria for admission
- Established cost for completing the program
- Recruited faculty for the program
- Provided training for faculty to ensure quality of teaching for adult learners seeking a second degree
- Developed and implemented program marketing plan
- Established partnerships with area hospitals with highest number of Diploma/TS prepared nurses requesting enrollment in the newly established program
- Developed evaluation criteria for program outcomes and effectiveness
- Recruited students who met admission requirements

- Program Support Services

- Developed preparatory courses for students who did not meet admission criteria in order to help them be admitted in the program
- Introduced faculty development workshops to those who teach in the TS to BSN program
- Provided ongoing support for faculty development
- Developed a process for program assessment

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