

Case Study Higher Education

University Medical Center /
Academic Accreditation



CCNE Accreditation: Nursing Academic Excellence

BACKGROUND

The U.S. Secretary of Education officially recognized the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) as a national accreditation agency. CCNE is an autonomous accrediting agency, contributes to the improvement of public health, and ensures the quality and integrity of baccalaureate, graduate, and residency programs in nursing.

CCNE serves the public interest by assessing and identifying nursing programs that engage in effective educational practices. With patient care growing progressively complex, moving into a constellation of new settings beyond the hospital, and requiring more intensified care for hospitalized patients who are increasingly elderly and acutely ill, demand has escalated for registered nurses with advanced levels of education and skills. Specifically, the health system faces an accelerating need for BSN prepared nurses, educated in critical thinking, leadership, case management, and health promotion.

As of June 2008, 76% of baccalaureate degree programs and 86% of master's degree programs at U.S. nursing schools had selected CCNE as their accrediting agency.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Client Challenges

- There was a need to obtain CCNE accreditation for a School of Nursing (SON) in Lebanon
- The quality and safety of patients was affected and required students to be prepared from a CCNE-accredited program with high-quality standards in nursing care
- The Dean and faculty of the SON were concerned that students who graduated from a non-CCNE-accredited program will have limited opportunities of employment in Lebanon, in the region, and in the United States
- The students graduating from a non-accredited school will have limited opportunities for furthering their education (Master or Ph.D. programs)
- The school's opportunity to attract students in the program will be difficult if the program is not accredited
- Faculty morale was low due to challenges associated in teaching in a non-accredited program
- The SON was facing difficulty in attracting reputable faculty in the field

Our Solution

- Revised nursing curricula
- Established teaching learning workshops
- Implemented a continuous program improvement plan
- Assured that the organizational structure is in compliance with accreditation standards

Our Intervention's Impact

CCNE Accreditation

- Second in the region

Governance & Management

- Improved faculty morale
- Improved faculty recruitment

Developmental opportunities such as the type afforded to nurses through the CCNE accreditation process are seen to promote nurse autonomy, which is beneficial for both nurses and employing organizations.

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IN FOCUS

Key Client Challenge

There was an urgent need to obtain CCNE accreditation for a School of Nursing in Lebanon

Our Solution

Governance and Management

- Planning

- Established a Curriculum Committee to develop guidelines for curriculum development
- Recruited a consulting team to help faculty determine criteria, identify weaknesses of the established programs, and create program benchmarks
- Promoted faculty governance

- Curriculum

- Revised nursing curricula

Education and Professional development

- Faculty Development

- Established teaching learning workshops to improve teaching skills of faculty
- Provided financial support for all program directors to attend CCNE-related conferences
- Recruited a program assessment officer to support program assessment activities i.e. learning outcomes

- Students

- Recruited a clinical placement coordinator to assure quality of clinical experiences of students
- Established a mentoring and writing center to support students who are in academic jeopardy

- Accreditation

- Obtained 5-year accreditation for all nursing programs
- Implemented a continuous program improvement plan to assure that all programs continue to meet accreditation standards
- Revised all programs every year to assure compliance with new or revised BSN Essentials as established by CCNE
- Assured that the organizational structure was maintained to continue compliance with accreditation standards
- Developed an annual process for program evaluation

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