

Case Study: Streamlining the Nurse Practitioner Precepting Experience at Federally Qualified Health Centers

Introduction

Key problems and issues

Nurse Practitioner (NP) is one of the fastest growing occupations, projected to grow 45% between 2022-2032, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics¹. A requirement to complete an NP program is a specific number of clinical hours shadowing another professional. An NP's preceptor can be a nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or physician. Competition for finding a preceptor is high, especially for NP students who are not affiliated with a large academic institution.

Thesis statement

As the healthcare field continues to become consolidated through buyouts and mergers, independent Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) are untapped resources for NP students looking for preceptors. The FQHCs are rich learning environments since many of them offer a broad array of services such as obstetrics, pediatrics, and internal medicine. There are a variety of steps that the preceptors, students, and administrators at FQHCs can take to streamline this experience for the benefit of everyone involved.

Background

According to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), as of Fall 2021 there were four primary academic institutions offering NP programs in South Carolina (SC): Anderson University; Clemson University; Francis Marion University; and University of South Carolina². There are also several large, well-known universities with robust online programs, such as Duke University, Ohio State, and Georgetown. Additionally, there are several online programs offered through traditionally virtual schools such as Capella and Walden University. Therefore, an NP student may face competition for precepting opportunities not just from their known classmates, but from other students participating in these virtual programs while living in SC.

¹ <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/fastest-growing.htm>

² <https://npprogramsearch.aanp.org/Search/Results>

Evaluation of the Case

Outline the various pieces of the case study that you are focusing on.

FQHCs provide a broad range of care and often include not only Physicians, Nurses, and Nurse Practitioners, but Dental Professionals, Mental Health Counselors, Social Workers, Community Health Workers, and Educators as well. This is a rich learning environment for NP students.

What is working and what is not working

Too many NP students

According to the South Carolina Health Professions Data Book³, the percent increase of Nurse Practitioners from 2019/2020 to 2021/2022 was 16.8. This is the second highest percent change in all 20 healthcare professions actively practicing in South Carolina. The percent increase in NPs is second only to Physician Assistants.

Proposed Solution/Changes

Provide specific and realistic solution(s) or changes needed.

Providers to embrace their role in educating the next generation

Explain why this solution was chosen.

Support this solution with solid evidence, such as:

Concepts from class (text readings, discussions, lectures)

Outside research

Personal experience (anecdotes)

Recommendations

Determine and discuss specific strategies for accomplishing the proposed solution.

If applicable, recommend further action to resolve some of the issues.

What should be done and who should do it?

NP students

Preceptors

³ <https://www.scahec.net/scohw/reports/139>

- Explore potential tax credits for your time precepting (may include restrictions on in-state students)⁴
 - How to claim: <https://dor.sc.gov/about/forms>
 - TC-62 (Make sure to use the form for the correct year)
 - Who is eligible: Eligible physicians, advanced practice registered nurses, or physician assistants who serve as a preceptor for at least two qualifying clinical rotations required by a medical school, physician assistant program, or advanced practice nursing program
 - Amounts per rotation are based on:
 - Type of preceptor (physician, advanced practice registered nurse or physician assistant)
 - Percentage of practice that is Medicaid-insured, Medicare-insured, or self-pay patients
 - Tax year
 - Credit is per rotation, for up to four rotations
 - Taxpayers serving more than four rotations can earn a deduction for up to six additional rotations
 - Can't exceed 50% of tax liability after all other credits are applied
 - Tax type: Income Tax
 - Credit carryforward: 10 years
- Participate in SC AHEC's free online virtual course "Preceptor Orientation & Education" found here <https://www.scahec.net/learn/programs/cpd/2445>

FQHC Administrators

- Ensure precepting is part of your workplace culture by including expectations for precepting in job postings and performance reviews

⁴ <https://dor.sc.gov/about/tax-credits>