



Report on Plan of Action of Florida Healthcare Workforce Challenges and Needs

This report includes a description of each healthcare workforce challenge, the identification of appropriate groups to implement the recommended change and findings of policy consideration for presentation to CareerSource Florida.

Healthcare Workforce Challenges

1. Lack of Soft Skills

Description

Florida healthcare employers have reported that soft skills - *the social skills and personal traits that allow effective and pleasant interactions with patients and co-workers* - require development in the new generation of healthcare workers. This skills deficit makes workers unprepared for the healthcare frontline with its heightened focus on improving the patient experience during each encounter. Furthermore, teamwork, interdepartmental collaboration and cooperation is critical to successful healthcare delivery.

The requisite soft-skills have been described by the FHW initiative to include the following attributes:

People Skills

- ✓ Communication
 - Active Listening
 - Non Verbal
 - Verbal
- ✓ Empathy
- ✓ Social Awareness/
Perceptiveness
- ✓ Teamwork

Self-Management Skills

- ✓ Accountability
- ✓ Adaptability
- ✓ Critical Thinking
- ✓ Emotional Intelligence
- ✓ Empathy
- ✓ Ethics
- ✓ Initiative
- ✓ Patience
- ✓ Positive Attitude
- ✓ Problem Solving
- ✓ Resilience
- ✓ Self-Confidence
- ✓ Strong Work Ethic

Plan of Action on Soft Skills Development

A. **FHW Staff:** Explore with the Florida Department of Education (DOE) whether soft skills could be addressed in all health profession curricula. Staff review of the DOE website revealed the following:

- Career and technical education currently includes a module on workplace readiness. The required content includes teamwork, problem solving, communication skills, self-confidence, and positive attitude. The module is designed to equip students with the skills to be successful in the workplace as identified by employers. Currently this content is covered in three class periods.
- Passed into law effective July 1, 2016, HB 1147 requires each Florida school district board to include a character-development program. Character-development is construed to be the qualities associated with social responsibility and respect for others. Instruction on leadership, interpersonal, and organization skills are included in the list of required content for Grades 9-12 to develop resilience, and to prepare students for the transition to the workplace.

NOTE: The Division of Florida Colleges representative on the FHW State Advisory Resource Group informed us that the Department of Economic Opportunity will be conducting a statewide survey on skills gaps, the results will be available early 2018.

- B. **Industry/Employers:** Contact educators and inform them of the challenges healthcare employers are experiencing with new graduates lacking appropriate soft skills in the work place. Work in partnership with academic programs to refine curricula for more immediate results.
- C. **Industry/Employers:** Florida, as a leader in tourism and hospitality has a ready pool of employees trained in soft skills. Recruit employees from this sector who are interested in a career change to healthcare.
- D. **CareerSource:** Develop a soft skills training program in collaboration with the tourism and hospitality sector that healthcare industry employers can use during orientation of new employees.

2. Job Readiness

Description

Employers routinely identify a lack of job readiness among recent graduates in healthcare professions. For entry level and difficult to fill positions, employers may need to develop a role specific training program. This challenge is similar to the lack of soft skills, but describes the lack of technical skills and/or knowledge for the healthcare role.

Plan of Action on Job Readiness

- A. **Industry/Employers:** Establish mentorship programs with a focus on enhancing job knowledge and skills development.
- B. **CareerSource:** Identify funding sources and establish residency and/or transitional programs in collaboration with healthcare delivery sites and education programs with possible funding through Department of Labor apprenticeship program.
- C. **FHW Regional Councils:** Bring together industry representatives and educators to discuss what is needed for graduates to be better prepared to transition into the workplace.
- D. **FHW Professional Advisory Resource Groups:** Identify challenges that contribute to the lack of job readiness.
- E. **FHW Members:** Identify existing best practices within the state of Florida to assure job readiness.

3. Teaching Faculty Shortage

Description

A shortage of faculty restricting the number of students that can be accepted in educational programs limiting the pipeline of new graduates. The average age of existing faculty reflects that many current faculty are approaching retirement. The absence of market competitive salaries may discourage professionals from choosing an academic career path.

Plan of Action on the Teaching Faculty Shortage

- A. **Elected Officials:** Address a healthcare faculty shortage through such means as:
 - Reevaluate the effect of an academic budget model on salary competitiveness for the health professions faculty with the goal of achieving market competitive salaries.
 - Institute statewide programs to encourage entry into academic programs preparing students for faculty positions in healthcare through scholarships, fellowships, or loan forgiveness programs.
 - Advocate for State University System Board of Governors legislative budget request related to faculty shortage and nursing education programs.
- B. **Academic Industry Leaders:** Explore feasibility of faculty salary subsidies from private sector.
- C. **Industry/Employers:** Support clinical faculty partnerships between healthcare organizations and academic programs.

- D. **FHW Staff:** Invite representatives from the Department of Education into the FHW State Advisory Resource Group. Engage their participation as a resource to our work and discussions.

4. Proliferation of Private Schools (Profit and Not-for-Profit)

Description

The high cost and poor quality of many of these programs, primarily in nursing, results in students unable to graduate, pass the national board exams, or successfully enter the workforce. While national accreditation is required for nursing, the five-year period for achieving accreditation may allow schools to operate without the intention to achieve accreditation.

Plan of Action to Assure Quality Education Programs in Healthcare

- A. **Industry/Employers:** Communicate to elected officials support for SB 328/HB543: Regulation of Nursing, to ensure the availability of quality nursing education programs as summarized below:
- 1) Authorizes the Board of Nursing (BON) to grant a one-year extension to a nursing education program that is on probation for failure to meet the graduate passage rate if the program is progressing towards meeting the rate.
 - 2) Requires any nursing education program that is on probation to notify its students and applicants of its status in writing.
 - 3) Removes a requirement that a nursing school must require a student who does not take the licensure examination within six months of graduation to enroll in and successfully complete a licensure examination preparatory course.
 - 4) Prohibits a nursing education program that was terminated or closed from reapplying for approval for 3 years.
 - 5) Authorizes the BON to perform an on-site evaluation of a nursing education program applicant to verify its compliance with application requirements.
 - 6) Eliminates the annual reports required by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) on the status of nursing education programs, but retains the requirement that the Florida Center on Nursing issue the annual report and include an assessment of the progress towards accreditation for certain nursing programs.
 - 7) Authorizes the BON to adopt rules related to nursing curriculum, nursing program implementation, and reapplication procedures for terminated or closed programs.

- B. **Industry/Employers:** Communicate to elected officials support for SB 186/ Postsecondary Educational Institutions, to mandate disclosures to students about the institution's approval, accreditation status, costs, and transferability of credits prior to enrollment. The proposed bill also requires programs to assess whether students have the ability to complete the program, and to ensure that the program is accurately described in all advertising material. Further, the bill would also require institutions to relate program offerings to state licensure requirements, where applicable.
- C. **FHW Staff:** Inquire with Professional Advisory Resource Group members if there are other professions that have this issue.

5. Licensure Compact

Members of the FHW initiative raised support for Florida to become a part of the multi-state licensure compact for registered nurses. However, this is no longer an issue as Florida is already approved to participate in the multi-state compact on December 31, 2018, or upon enactment of the Nurse Licensure Compact into law by 26 states, whichever occurs first. Details about the bill follow:

HB 1061-Nurse Licensure Compact:

Creates Nurse Licensure Compact; provides for recognition of licenses in party states; provides requirements for obtaining & retaining multistate license; provides effect on current licensees; requires all party states to participate in coordinated licensure information system of all RNs & LPNs; provides for development of system, reporting procedures, & exchange of certain information between party states; establishes Interstate Commission of Nurse Licensure Compact Administrators; authorizes certain disciplinary action under compact for certain prohibited acts; requires Florida Center for Nursing to analyze supply & demand of nurses & make future projections; requires DOH to report significant investigative information on nurse licensee to coordinated licensure information system; requires nurse holding multistate license to report participation in treatment program to department; provides eligibility criteria for multistate license.

Policy Considerations

As required, below is a summary of policy considerations for CareerSource Florida:

- Assurance of the inclusion of soft skill development in K-12 academic programs.
- Employers should adopt residency or other programs to assist new employees in their role transition.
- CareerSource should work with the Department of Labor to rename their apprenticeship program to be more inclusive of professional roles.
- State leadership should implement changes to academic budget allocations to accommodate market competitive salary structures for all health professions.
- Legislature could implement incentive programs to encourage admission into academic programs leading to preparation for entry into faculty roles.
- Support for legislation regarding the regulation of nursing education (SB328, HB543).