

Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital Nursing Career Ladders

- **Purpose:** Promote the nursing profession by providing tuition assistance to any employee attending or who wishes to attend nursing school. This includes LPN, RN, and advanced nursing programs (e.g., existing BS and MSN).
- **Target Population:** Full-time and part-time employees at Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital (SRH), which is a member of the Partners HealthCare System.
- **Structure:**
 - Curry College, RN to BSN Program: Offers diploma and associate's degree nurses an opportunity to earn a BSN in approximately two years while staying on the job. Courses are offered onsite at Spaulding between 4:00 P.M. and 6:30 P.M., which is at the end of the dayshift and paid for by the hospital. Using a concentrated cohort model in which all students begin at the same time and progress through the courses together until graduation, the hospital now has two groups of twenty students going through the program.
 - Create-A-Nurse Program: Provides courses for staff who are interested in becoming RNs a chance to earn an associate's degree in nursing from Roxbury Community College (RCC) in two years. Like the RN to BSN Program, courses are offered onsite to students. Since there was an overwhelming demand to the program, two cohorts were formed with ten students in each group; one group had students who had completed prerequisites and were eligible to begin the ADN program. Students in the second group are finishing prerequisite coursework through RCC before entering the nursing program.
- **Outreach methods:** Human Resources Office provides program information to all hospital staff and students currently enrolled in the programs share their experiences with others during staff meetings and through various information sessions offered.
- **Resources:** Staff receive \$3,500 annually to help pursue a nursing degree. In return, staff are required to work a minimum of twenty hours a week at the hospital and asked to make a two year employment commitment to the SRH Network after completing the program.
- **Lessons learned:** Leadership at the hospital played a critical role in demonstrating its commitment to investing in their staff's future. Spaulding and its collaboration with Curry College and RCC have developed a program that responds to some of the barriers that adult learners encounter barriers like busy work schedules, family obligations, and finances.

Faculty provides additional support to students by offering extra class sessions and responding to questions sent via e-mail. Many students in the RCC program attended high schools where English was not the primary language of instruction, so faculty have been especially supportive by dedicating a sufficient amount of time for instructing these students.

- **Notable outcomes:** Enrollment exceeded original expectations so that additional cohorts were pulled together for both programs. And since the programs' inception in the Fall of 2002, over 50 employees have started on a career pathway to earning higher nursing degrees. Staff persons have been satisfied with the onsite courses and the programs have been a moral booster for the institution and its overall recruitment and retention efforts.