

March 24, 2020

Karen E.B. Evans, MSN, RN-BC
Executive Director
Maryland Board of Nursing
4140 Patterson Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21215-2254
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Dear Ms. Evans:

As I am sure you are aware, the pandemic created by the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is creating challenges for the US health care system. The impact is being felt by schools of nursing, including the University of Maryland School of Nursing, as health care and community agencies began to restrict nursing student participation in onsite client care earlier this month. Governor Hogan announced Department of Health restrictions on visitor entry to Senior Care Facilities, including those providing community services to older adults. These facilities have included nursing students in the category of visitors. And more recently, the Governor announced the closure of Maryland schools which also serve as important clinical sites for our students. Inpatient hospitals have followed, either completely barring student entry or asking the school to screen students for travel, exposure to large crowds or potential COVID-19 cases, or symptoms of student infection with the virus. And on March 21, 2020 University of Maryland, Baltimore, Interim President, Dr. Bruce Jarrell, discontinued all UMB student's experiential learning that involves face to face contact. The situation and resultant impact on the school is changing daily and will likely do so for the immediate future.

On March 12, 2020, the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) issued guidance on modifications of didactic coursework and clinical practice experiences that are the results of the efforts to slow the spread of COVID-19. I want to inform the Maryland Board of Nursing the University of Maryland School of Nursing is following CCNE guidance and is moving face-to-face classes to an online format and utilizing simulation in its entry into practice programs: BSN and Clinical Nurse Leader MSN. The school will look to the program, course and clinical learning objectives and develop alternative experiences (virtual and simulated) to meet objectives that were reported, even if students in the current semester will not be able to complete the exact number of hours planned due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

CCNE's March 12th guidance stated these temporary modifications in didactic and clinical delivery of courses did not require a notice to CCNE of substantive change unless the modifications continued beyond August 31, 2020. I doubt I am alone in hoping the COVID-19 pandemic will have abated by then, and nursing education, along with everyday life, will have returned to normal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jane Marie Kirschling". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Jane M. Kirschling, PhD, RN, FAAN
Dean and Professor
University of Maryland School of Nursing