



MARYLAND ACTION COALITION

Creating a Healthier Maryland

FUTURE OF NURSING™ CAMPAIGN FOR ACTION

Growing the Associate-to-Bachelor Degree Program

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Abstract

Background: Anne Arundel Community College (AACC) was awarded a Nursing Support Program II grant established by the Health Services Cost Review Commission and the Maryland Higher Education Commission in 2018 to create a pathway to baccalaureate nursing programs. The Associates to Bachelor Degree Dual program (ATB) was implemented Fall 2018 and has grown from 15 to 70 enrolled students. While most hospitals in Maryland require nurses to be Bachelor prepared the prospect of incurring more debt can be problematic for students. The ATB program affords students the opportunity to begin taking BSN courses while enrolled in the ADN program, greatly reducing the cost for the student.

The Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation anticipates a 21.77% increase in the number of registered nurse openings from 2018-2028

(<http://www.dllr.state.md.us/lmi/iandoproj/maryland.shtml>).

Objectives: To recruit potential students while also ensuring that we are intentionally attracting a diverse population.

Methods: To increase the number of students enrolled in the ATB program The Nurse Progression Navigator (NPN) attempts to reach out to students in a variety of settings. After students receive their provisional acceptance letters to the nursing program, the NPN emails a letter briefly explaining the ATB program and encourages interested students to schedule an appointment. Information sessions with partner Universities are planned for nursing students to learn more about the program. The NPN collaborates with the Admissions Department and the Health Science Advisors often receiving referrals to meet with pre-nursing students. A faculty member and the NPN present two nursing information sessions a month for prospective students, often resulting in students making appointments to assist with ATB educational pathway planning. Collaborating with high school counselors and signature program facilitators, the NPN is often asked to give presentations to classes or meet with students interested in pursuing nursing as a career. The student may be encouraged to apply to the Early College Access Program (ECAP) to accelerate their college track. Participation in ECAP affords the student an opportunity to be more adequately prepared for the rigors of the nursing program.

Results: Program ready students demonstrated a significantly greater completion rate of the nursing program than students who are not program ready, which aligns with findings from past studies (Peruski, 2019).

Conclusion: While the NPN is available to all Anne Arundel County High Schools, the focus is on schools with a greater diversity of student population. "The design of an effective recruitment strategy should be driven by the mission of the educational institution and aligned to reflect the targeted population of potential students. Recruitment efforts and activities should be designed to improve the ability to attract a diverse population and more firmly establish a continuing pipeline of possible students" (<https://www.aacnursing.org/Portals/42/Diversity/Diversity-Tool-Kit.pdf>). Recognizing that education is the key to elevating some family and individuals out of poverty situations, for some students coming to our nursing program (whether or not they participate in ATB) graduating can be life changing.