



## **Focus on Clinical Faculty: Preparing New Nursing Instructors across Maryland**

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Hundreds of nurse educators teach in clinical environments statewide. These clinical nursing instructors are positioned to have a great impact on nursing students, yet often are not prepared for the realities and requirements of their new role. While these nurses are excellent clinicians, their skills do not automatically transfer to teaching. They may not have enough teaching experience, especially with students in a clinical setting, to be safe and effective instructors. According to the most recent American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN, 2015) fact sheet, nursing faculty shortages continue to limit student enrollment capacity while the need for registered nurses persists. The limited number of nursing faculty is of national concern. There is an especially urgent need for clinical faculty, as schools rely on many part-time adjuncts to teach in clinical settings. Without consistent preparation and ongoing support of new clinical instructors, the crucial link between didactic content, clinical practice, and desired program outcomes may be at risk.

The Institute for Educators at the University of Maryland School of Nursing recognizes the need for professional role preparation for clinical faculty. With the support of NSP II grant funds, the Institute is working hard to address it! In alignment with its mission and the objectives of their FY 16 NSP II grant to increase statewide resources, the Institute is delivering on its goal of preparing new clinical faculty statewide.

This presentation will describe the identified clinical faculty learning needs, implementation of successful clinical faculty workshops in 2015-16, and the Institute's next steps to provide ongoing clinical faculty education and support. Focus will be on unique aspects of the workshop, particularly:

- a program designed specifically for clinical nursing faculty;
- morning didactic sessions led by national expert, highly active afternoon sessions for application of content;
- combination of faculty with four distinct areas of expertise: clinical teaching, education design and delivery, simulation and debriefing, and course direction; and
- use of standardized students (professional actors trained to portray students in difficult clinical situations) to engage participants in real-time teaching scenarios.

This work is critical, as well-prepared clinical faculty can deliver the best possible learning experience to students, who then provide safe, effective patient care. By advancing the education of novice nursing faculty, we can influence the overall advancement and transformation of nursing education.