HRSA - Nursing Workforce Development

$31.3 MILLION
Federal HRSA Funding at VUSN (1999-2018)

$9.2 MILLION
Advanced Nursing Education Grants (2000-2018)

$9.4 MILLION
Nurse Faculty Loan Program (since 2008)

$5.6 MILLION
Nurse Education Practice, Quality and Retention Grants (2001-2018)

$2.5 MILLION
Advanced Education Nursing Traineeship (2000-2001)

Help for sexual assault survivors when and where needed

Imagine surviving the most horrific experience in your life—a sexual assault—only to find that you had to travel elsewhere for treatment from someone with specialized training. That’s what the majority of Americans sexually assaulted—women, children and men—have to do. Although one in six women and one in 33 men will experience an attempted or completed rape, there are only about 1,500 Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANEs) in the country.

Vanderbilt University School of Nursing (VUSN) has received a $1.43 million grant from a U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) initiative to develop and launch a SANE education program. Vanderbilt’s program is projected to increase the number of SANE-trained and certified advanced practice registered nurses practicing in emergency departments in rural or underserved U.S. communities.

SANEs have specialized education to conduct forensic examinations that have been shown to provide better physical and mental health care for assault survivors, deliver better evidence collection and support higher prosecution rates. They treat patients holistically, with compassionate and comprehensive care that takes into account the patient’s current acute care needs and the possible long-term effects of sexual assault.

Because they are in emergency departments, emergency nurse practitioners (ENP) are often the first to treat victims of sexual assault. Increasing the number of ENPs educated as SANEs will mean those patients will receive swift, specialized care. Additionally, many of VUSN’s ENP graduates choose to practice in rural or underserved areas. Research has shown that the incidence of sexual assault in rural communities exceeds urban areas, with many states reporting few or, in some cases, no examiners in rural areas.

VUSN launched its SANE education program in January 2019. In addition to ENP students, the 15-member class included women’s health and pediatric nurse practitioner students.

Integrating needed mental health care in a primary care setting

In Nashville’s arguably most economically depressed area, VUSN and nonprofit housing organization Urban Housing Solutions provide consistent and accessible health care through a community health clinic called the Clinic at Mercury Courts. Launched in 2012 with a Title VIII grant focusing on interprofessional collaborative practice, the nurse-managed clinic has made significant strides in improving the health of its community.

In 2017, VUSN received HRSA funding to integrate mental and behavioral health services into the Clinic at Mercury Courts. In the clinic’s first five years, its health care team had realized that the community suffered from a significantly higher rate of substance abuse and
mood disorders than the general public. VUSN believed that adding mental health services was essential in caring for Mercury Courts’ highly vulnerable population and that it would provide early intervention for anxiety, PTSD, depression, alcohol abuse, substance abuse and adult ADHD.

The HRSA funding allowed the clinic to add a full-time psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioner, care manager/care coordinator, and part-time/remote psychiatrist to its interprofessional team.

In 2018 alone, 602 patients received integrated mental health services at the Mercury Courts clinic site, generating 1,411 visits. Of those 602 patients, 110 were enrolled in a collaborative care model program for depression and anxiety. The other 500 or so patients were seen for various mental health conditions, often in collaboration with the clinic’s primary care provider, a family nurse practitioner.

In addition, 1,071 patients were screened for depression, anxiety, suicidality, PTSD, substance use and alcohol abuse at each primary care visit. In 12 months, primary care plus mental health visits totaled 4,533. Of those screened, 177 people required additional screening and/or intervention, some acutely.

Adding behavioral health services to Mercury Courts also allowed Vanderbilt psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioner students to begin clinical training at the site, providing patient care and allowing them to participate in the interprofessional team-based training model.

In January 2019, VUSN began expanding this primary care/behavioral health model to another Nashville area location, Melrose Primary Care. Melrose provides nurse-midwifery care for pregnant and postpartum women as well as primary care. Mercury Courts’ psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioner serves patients at both sites, providing screenings, therapy and medication management.

**HRSA awards $1.3 million to School of Nursing for future faculty**

In 2018, VUSN received a $1.3 million HRSA Nurse Faculty Loan Program (NFLP) grant to support Doctor of Nursing Practice students who plan to become nursing faculty. The award brings the funds the school has received from the program since 2008 to $9.38 million. Health care experts nationwide have warned that with the growing and aging needs of our population, the demand for nurses will only intensify. Vanderbilt responded to the need for increased numbers of doctorally prepared faculty by growing its Ph.D. in Nursing Science program and launching its Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program. The American Association of Colleges of Nursing reports that nursing schools turn away thousands of qualified applicants each year. Lack of faculty is frequently cited as a chief reason.

**Accomplishments through Title VIII since 2008**

385 DNP graduates and 38 Ph.D. graduates since the program started, with 330 graduates participating in the Nurse Faculty Loan Program. VUSN started the DNP program in 2010 to increase the number of doctorally trained nurses who can serve as faculty in nursing schools, part of the solution to increasing the number of nursing students.

79 persons of color have earned Doctor of Nursing Practice degrees from Vanderbilt since the school began its DNP program.

4,782 Master of Science in Nursing graduates since 2008. School of Nursing graduates can be found in rural and urban areas, with alumni in all 50 states, D.C. and U.S. territories. More than 40 percent of VUSN alumni provide health care in rural and underserved areas.

**Title VIII funds** allowed VUSN to develop its innovative and nationally recognized blended course programs, which combine concentrated intensive visits to campus with distance learning elements. **Students in rural areas** can earn advanced degrees while continuing to reside and work in their home communities.

Other **Title VIII grants** helped VUSN launch its Nurse-Midwifery specialty in 2000. That program is ranked as the No. 1 Nurse-Midwifery education program in the U.S.

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