HRSA – Nursing Workforce Development

$7.6 MILLION
Federal HRSA Funding at VUSN, from FY 2016 to FY 2020

$7.2 MILLION
Advanced Nursing Education Grants, from FY 2016 to FY 2020

$3.8 MILLION
Nurse Faculty Loan Program, from FY 2016 to FY 2020

$1.5 MILLION
Nurse Education Practice, Quality and Retention Grants, from FY 2016 to FY 2020

School of Nursing to increase diversity in health care providers

Vanderbilt University School of Nursing (VUSN) has launched a scholarship program for family nurse practitioner, nurse-midwifery, and dual nurse-midwifery/FNP master’s students to increase diversity in primary health care providers, particularly in medically underserved areas. Funded by a $3.2 million grant from the Heath Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), the scholarship program provides economically disadvantaged students from underrepresented racial and ethnic minority backgrounds with scholarships, support, and education tailored for work in rural or underserved areas.

The program’s intent is to improve primary and maternity care outcomes for vulnerable populations. According to the program’s principal investigator, diversity of health care clinicians is linked to improved access to care for racial and ethnic minority patients, improved cultural competence of the general health care work force, greater patient choice, better patient-provider communication, and better educational experiences as students. The scholarship program also is designed to meet the need for primary care providers in medically underserved communities. Currently, most VUSN students obtain their clinical experiences in rural or medically underserved communities. Many students express interest in employment at their clinical locations or similar settings, but student loan debt can be a roadblock.

Empowering nurses to support survivors of sexual assault

The majority of women, children, and men who are sexually assaulted have to travel elsewhere for treatment from someone with specialized training. 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.

With a $1.43 million HRSA grant, VUSN has developed and launched a SANE education program, which is increasing the number of SANE-trained and -certified advanced practice registered nurses practicing in emergency departments in rural or underserved U.S. communities. Students obtain clinical experience in Middle Tennessee. Partners in this initiative include Vanderbilt University Medical Center; Our Kids, which provides pediatric/adolescent SANEs in 47 Middle Tennessee counties; Nashville's Sexual Assault Center; and EmCare, a national organization that is one of the largest staffing organizations for emergency departments.

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 considers the patient’s current acute care needs and the possible long-term effects of sexual assault.
Integrating needed mental health care in a primary care setting

VUSN and nonprofit housing organization Urban Housing Solutions operate a nurse-led, team-based primary care safety-net clinic in urban Nashville. Vanderbilt Primary Care (formerly the Clinic at Mercury Court) was launched in 2012 with a HRSA Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development grant focused on interprofessional collaborative practice. The nurse-led clinic has made significant strides in improving the health of its community.

Last year, 583 patients received integrated mental health services at the then-Mercury Court location. Of those patients, 374 were enrolled in the clinic’s intensive behavioral integration program for depression and anxiety. An additional 340 patients were seen for major psychiatric conditions, with some managed by the clinic and others by community psychiatric care providers.

Overall, 1,102 patients were screened for depression, anxiety, suicidality, PTSD, and substance use at each primary care visit. In those routine visits, 112 patients screened positive as having suicidal ideas and the clinic team was able to respond accordingly with care. The majority of those patients came to the clinic for medical, not mental health, purposes, which indicates that primary care sites can be excellent gatekeepers for patients in need of mental health services. This patient population included homeless people, 176 non-English speakers, and 357 individuals living 120 percent below the poverty level.

HRSA awards $1.35 million to School of Nursing for future faculty

Vanderbilt University School of Nursing has received a $1.35 million grant from the HRSA Nurse Faculty Loan Program (NFLP) to support Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) students who are interested in becoming nursing faculty members. The award brings the funds the school has received for the NFLP program since 2008 to nearly $10 million. Health care experts nationwide have warned that, with the growing and aging needs of our population, the demand for nurses will only intensify. Yet, the American Association of Colleges of Nursing reports that nursing schools turn away thousands of qualified applicants each year, often due to lack of faculty. Vanderbilt is responding to the need for increased numbers of doctorally prepared faculty by growing its Ph.D. in Nursing Science program and its DNP program.

Accomplishments through Title VIII since 2010

In the last 10 years, VUSN has produced 454 DNP graduates and 40 Ph.D. graduates, with 374 graduates participating in HRSA’s Title VIII Nurse Faculty Loan Program. VUSN started the DNP program in 2008 to increase the number of doctorally trained nurses who can serve as faculty in nursing schools, part of the solution to the increasing demand for more nursing students. Since the school began the program, 461 persons of color have earned DNP degrees from Vanderbilt.

Since 2010, 4,058 Master of Science in Nursing students have graduated from VUSN. School of Nursing graduates can be found in rural and urban areas, with alumni in all 50 states, Washington, D.C., and U.S. territories. More than 40 percent of VUSN alumni provide health care in rural and underserved areas.

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.

For more information, please contact Vanderbilt’s Office of Federal Relations:
Christina West (202) 216-4370 • Heather Bloemhard (202) 216-4368
federalrelations@vanderbilt.edu
FY 2020