
*Delaware Nursing Home Residents
Quality Assurance Commission*

DNHRQAC Meeting of September 17, 2024

11:00 a.m.

Virtually via Cisco Webex

Anchor Location: Polaris Healthcare & Rehabilitation Center

21 W Clarke Ave

Milford, DE 19963

FINAL

Commission member(s) present: Lisa Furber, DNHRQAC Chair; Cheryl Heiks; Kori Bingaman, RN, NHA; Norma Jones; Christopher Marques, Esquire; Mary Peterson, RN, BSN; Brian Frazee; Jennifer McLaughlin, OT; Dr. Melissa Winters, PsyD and Hooshang Shanehsaz, RPH.

Deputy Attorney General (DAG) Patrick Smith, Esquire was in attendance.

Ms. Peterson and a guest attended in-person @ the anchor location. The remainder of meeting participants attended virtually or by phone. A quorum of commission members was present.

Commission members not in attendance: Representative Eric Morrison, Dr. Avani Virani and Senator Spiros Mantzavinos.

Others Present: Margaret Bailey, DNHRQAC Executive Director; Kevin Andrews, Public; Dr. Karen Panunto, Del State University; Dr. Tracey Harpe, Del State University; Rabbi Halberstam, EHRI; Corinna Getchell, DHCQ; Alene Wilker, DHCQ; Josh Barnes, DE Board of Nursing & Del Tech Community College (Dover Campus); Denise Elliott, DHCQ; Jim McCracken, LeadingAge; Annette Moore, The Moorings @ Lewes; RuthAnn Lander, Public and Paul Smiley, Gilpin Hall. One individual attended by phone and was not identified.

1. Call to Order & Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 9:33 am. A welcome was extended to Brian Frazee. Mr. Frazee joined the commission as designee for Delaware Healthcare Association. Commission members introduced themselves and their position on the Commission. Virtual meeting rules were shared with participants.

2. Approval of the meeting minutes

August 7, 2024 and August 15, 2024 meeting minutes were approved as written by a majority. Three commission members abstained from voting on meeting minutes of 8/15/2024.

3. Approval of Eagle's Law Staffing Ratio Waiver Application

A motion was made for full commission to approve the waiver application with one minor edit: to remove the words "to be completed no later than August 8, 2024" in section A of the form. These words were referring to a recent Federal mandate relating to facility assessments, which may continue to change over time. As a result, commission members decided to remove the date.

The motion was seconded, and roll call vote netted 8 "yes" and 2 "abstentions". The waiver application was approved by the full commission with one minor edit.

4. Conflict of Interest Form – draft

An edited form was forwarded to commission members prior to the meeting. The draft form included additional language from Delaware Code that was omitted on current Conflict of Interest

Form. DAG Smith incorporated the “added” language into the revised Conflict of Interest form for consideration. Commission members decided to table discussion on this item until a future meeting.

Quorum – Two commission members had to leave @ 10:00 am due to a leadership meeting, causing a loss of quorum. As a result, no additional items were voted upon by the full commission.

5. Discussion of:

Del State University Geriatric Workforce Education Program

Dr Karen Panunto, Dr. Tracey Harpe and Rabbi Halberstam provided details regarding a partnership between Del. State University (DSU) Wesley College of Health and Behavioral Sciences and Education, Health and Research International, Inc (EHRI) to support an educational initiative to increase expertise capability of the geriatric healthcare workforce in Kent and Sussex counties.

This is a five-year \$5M grant. The program is in its first year of implementation. The DSU-EHRI partnership started on July 1, 2024.

The purpose of this initiative is to develop and facilitate training curriculum enabling healthcare workers to employ best practices relating to caring for senior citizens in various stages of dementia and other late-life diseases.

This grant-funded program will also provide training and internship opportunities for DSU students in the nursing and social work programs. Clinical placements for nursing and social work students will begin during the fall of 2024 semester as part of the Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Program. They anticipate 69 students participating in the program during the first year and 75-8 students each year thereafter.

The grant, although broad, will offer a career ladder opportunity for Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) and other direct care workers. The initiative plans to develop a registered apprenticeship model for the advancement of direct care workers over the next five years.

Currently, clinical sites will be hosted by Polaris Healthcare and Rehab Center (Milford, DE).

If other long term care facilities are interested in hosting a clinical site, please contact: Dr. Tamika Sales, Clinical Coordinator: tsales@desu.edu or 302.736.2451.

Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)/Registered Nurse (RN) Schools

Josh Barnes, DE Board of Nursing and Del Tech (Dover Campus) Chair provided information relating to Delaware Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) and Registered Nurse (RN) Schools.

Currently, there are 9 schools approved by the Delaware Board of Nursing. The approval process is completed in February of every year. Two schools were added in the last two years: Dawn Career Institute and Del Tech Stanton LPN Program. No LPN/RN schools have been removed or closed within the past 2 years.

Number of students that matriculate through the Delaware LPN/RN Programs annually:

CY 2023 - 589 RN (250 BSN, 24 Diploma, 315 AD) and 119 LPN students

CY 2023 RN/LPN Exam Pass Rates:

RN – Scores range between 86.64% and 100%

LPN – Scores range between 88.24% and 100%

The RN/LPN curriculum @ each school tends to be reviewed at the end of every academic year. One school has not made any major curriculum changes in more than 10 years.

Course work related to abuse, neglect and financial exploitation is required within each school's curriculum. The number of hours related to dementia training and/or courses related to aging population varies between 12 – 30 hours for nursing students. DE Code requires students to complete 400 hands-on hours.

Financial assistance is offered at all Delaware LPN/RN Schools. Students are vetted through the Adult Abuse Registry (AAR) and Background Check Center (BCC).

Clinical rotations are primarily offered in conjunction with the schools only during day hours, however, a few RN/LPN schools offer weekend and evening hours.

Number of clinical hours RN/LPN students spend in long term care setting varies from none to 192 hours. Number of clinical hours RN/LPN students spend in other settings ranges from 100 - 1080 hours.

Barriers:

The RN/LPN Schools are struggling to recruit and retain adjunct or full-time faculty members. The lack of faculty members affects the number of students that can be admitted into a nursing program. The need for more faculty requires exploring collaborative partnerships and innovative solutions. Salary inequities for educators compared to bedside was mentioned. Additionally, trying to get clinical instructors to work evenings or weekends due to conflict with their normal work schedule (12-hour shifts) is also a barrier.

Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) Schools

Aleen Wilker, Advance Practice Registered Nurse (APRN), Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA), RN, Compliance Nurse, presented data relating to the Delaware Certified Nursing Assistants (CNA) Program.

Currently there are 28 approved CNA Schools. 4 schools have been removed during the past 2 years: 2 voluntary closures and 2 schools withdrawn due to not providing access during survey. There are 2 school applications currently being reviewed by the curriculum committee.

The types of CNA Schools: within high schools, facility lead or private programs. The high school programs charge students for BCC. The facility lead programs do not charge students anything to attend. The private programs cost about \$2,500 per student (some offer payment plans).

January 2023, a rapid training program was offered to 100 National Guard members.

Many faculty members that serve in the clinical portion of CNA training programs are retired. They often work on a part-time basis and need approval from DHCQ. Ms. Wilker's has often

suggested to the nurse aide programs they should contact the Delaware Nurses Association to express the need for faculty members.

Textbook list is updated every two years. The textbooks must be published within the last 5 years.

Number of student graduates each year (completed training and certification):

2022 - 771 students

2023 – 723 students

2024 – 643 thus far

Recertification is required every 2 years, which includes 2 hours of abuse, neglect and maltreatment training; 6 hours of dementia training and 16 hours of assorted topics. Training examples were provided in the presentation.

The certification requirement list is updated every December, therefore new training materials are being offered. The cost for recertification is \$25, reciprocity is \$30.

The State of Delaware contracted with Relias in January 2020. Everything went electronic relating to Certified Education Credits (CEUs) and the CNA licensing process. The fee covers both training and license renewal. Ms. Furber mentioned the renewal process has become a lot easier since the State switched to an electronic process.

There are currently 6,327 active CNA's are on the Delaware CNA Registry. 100 individuals (annually) are added to the active CNA Registry by reciprocity.

Delaware Administrative Code, Title 16, Section 3220 was updated last relating to CNA Training – August 1, 2022. At that time, the number of clinical training hours were reduced.

Ms. Furber shared concern of the clinical practice hours reduced from 75 to 16, a few years back. Although Ms. Wilker encourages training programs to provide more hours for students, she acknowledges 16 hours is the Federal minimum requirement. Ms. Wilker added that most Delaware CNA Schools provide 40 clinical practice hours.

Ms. Peterson suggested investigating whether the decrease in clinical practice hours is related to an increase in the number of Adult Abuse Registry placements. Ms. Wilker shared that she has looked at whether a decrease in CNA clinical hours is related to the increase in AAR placements. She advised that since the decrease in clinical hours (75 to 16), the increase of AAR placements are not new CNA graduates.

Ms. Heiks suggested DHCQ might want to dig deeper into AAR, to see if individuals placed on AAR are from temporary staffing agencies.

Ms. Wilker mentioned the Department of labor offers financial assistance, however, only offers it to 11 of the 28 approved CNA Schools. As a result, some schools must get private funding and coordinate with LTC facilities to sponsor students who will need to agree to work at that facility afterwards, for a period.

Clinical hours can be done in a long-term care facility or hospital. DHCQ specifies the contract must include a focus on training relating to the elderly population.

As DHCQ compliance nurses go out to complete an annual or complaint survey, any LTC facility that is sanctioned with a fine greater than \$10,483, in addition to a few other caveats, are not

allowed to teach nurse aide students for a period of 24 months. Once a facility comes off the restricted list, the nurse aide training program must obtain a new contract with the facility and send to DHCQ for approval.

LTC facilities on the “restricted list” can have LPN/RN students complete their clinical requirement there. Ms. Getchell added “CMS and the State have requirements for the CNA programs; however, CMS does not regulate the nursing programs. Delaware does not have any oversight about the nursing schools and where they can or cannot do their clinicals.”

As a result of Federal and State regulations, there are currently 20 long-term care facilities within the State of Delaware which may not host CNA students due to the imposition of CMP’s.

Although having a (20) restricted clinical site list, students still need an opportunity to train within LTC environment. Ms. Wilker has reached out to Complete Care, Genesis and others in Delaware to connect them with the high schools and other private CNA training programs, to form a partnership and provide the clinical component.

Ms. Wilker’s shared that currently, the biggest challenges for nurse aide training are funding and language barriers. Recently there has been several French speaking individuals participating in a CNA training program. Only two CNA Schools in Delaware currently have bi-lingual faculty members.

6. Old/New Business

DNHRQAC Subcommittee Updates

Updates were provided regarding DNHRQAC Eagle’s Law Staffing Rati Waiver Subcommittee. Due to time constraints, updates for the other DNRQAC Subcommittees were tabled until the next full commission meeting.

7. Public Comment

Kevin Andrews provided feedback about the number of Delaware long-term care facilities that cannot host a CNA Program due to imposed civil monetary penalties and lack of faculty members in the RN/LPN and CNA Schools.

6. Next DNHRQAC Meeting – October 15, 2024 @ 9:30 am. This meeting will be conducted via virtual platform and in-person anchor location. Meeting invite and details will be forwarded to commission members & available on the Delaware Public Meeting Calendar.

7. Adjournment

This meeting was adjourned at 11:26 am.

Attachments: DNHRQAC Meeting of September 17, 2024 – meeting agenda
DNHRQAC Meeting of August 7, 2024 – minutes draft
DNHRQAC Meeting of August 15, 2024 – minutes draft
DNHRQAC Eagle’s Law Staffing Ratio Waiver Form – final draft
DNHRQAC Eagle’s Law Staffing Ratio PowerPoint Presentation – final draft
DNHRQAC Eagle’s Law Staffing Ratio Rubric/Decision – final draft
DNHRQAC Conflict of Interest Form - draft
Questions for LPN/RN and CNA Schools