

Nursing VALOR Program Proposal Martinsburg Veterans Affairs Medical Center

Section A: Recruitment and Retention Issues

We started this fiscal year with 81.6 nursing vacancies, a 16.64% vacancy rate for all nursing positions. RN vacancies accounted for 42.4 of them, a 12.87% RN vacancy rate. Of the RN vacancies, 9.4 were on our acute medical/surgical unit, 5.4 were in the ICU and 6 were in the Operating Room. Vacancies on these acute care areas accounted for 17% of all RN vacancies.

Our recruitment and retention difficulties are the result of several issues. We are located in the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia where four other hospitals actively recruit from the same local colleges and universities we rely on for the majority of our nurses. We are also within driving distance of the Baltimore/Washington, DC metropolitan area where salaries are typically higher.

We attend the careers fairs the local colleges and universities hold and the Nurse Recruiter participates in panel discussions with RN classes in these colleges to tell them about the Martinsburg VA Medical Center and the benefits of being an employee. These sessions allow potential employees to ask questions and gather information about VA employment.

Our employment process is handled through USA Jobs which gives us more visibility and has streamlined our process to a degree and we are on Facebook, Twitter, and other forms of social media which has also increased our visibility.

We have affiliations with the area nursing schools and students come to our facility for part of their clinical experience. We always encourage students to consider us as a potential place of employment. We have had several nurses decline job offers this year for salary reasons. The majority of these were nurses with Associate Degrees, some with many years of experience, who already make more than we can offer at the top of our Nurse I pay scale.

Section B Facility Information

Our facility offers a full range of services which will provide excellent learning experiences for students. We have 559 inpatient beds: 69 acute care hospital beds (7 ICU, 38 Medical/Surgical and 24 Psychiatry). We also have 178 Nursing Home Care Unit beds and a 312 bed Rehabilitation Domiciliary. In addition to our inpatient units, we have 6 Community Based Outpatient Clinics – 3 of our own and 3 under contract for services. We also have a variety of specialty areas which are potential sites for learning – Neurology, Cardiology, Hematology and Urology to name a few. Refer to Attachment 1 for more details about our services.

Our patients typically come from 4 states – West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia and include both metropolitan and rural clients. The age range of our patients is from early twenties to late nineties. Though predominately male, our population continues to see increases in the amount of female patients and we are working to increase our women veteran services.

Our patients present with multiple diagnoses which will allow a student to have a variety of learning experiences while here. We care for large numbers of patients with hypertension, diabetes, cancer, heart disease, strokes, COPD, etc.

Intensive Care Unit – ICU is an excellent place for students to learn due to the fact that it is a smaller unit (currently 7) and the staff has the opportunity to spend more time with students for one to one training. This unit exposes students to patients who are critically ill and provides an opportunity for them to develop more critical thinking skills and work with specialized equipment.

Medical/Surgical Unit – Our acute 38 bed Medical/Surgical unit provides a patient mix of cardiac telemetry patients with respiratory, oncology and various other medical diagnoses. Patient age ranges from young adult to the very elderly. Nurses on this unit acquire in depth experience caring for a pre and post-op orthopedic, urology, and general surgery patients.

Long Term Care – Four long term care units allow the students to become more familiar with the patients and families due to the patients' extended stay. The Long Term Care Program has a strong multidisciplinary approach to patient care. Programs such as Inpatient Respite Care, Palliative Care, and the Geriatric Evaluation Clinic provide an enhanced learning experience.

Mental Health – The variety of programs in Mental Health allows students to have experience with group meetings, therapy, caring for patients in restraint or seclusion, etc. while caring for patients dealing with alcohol detoxification, substance abuse, homelessness, mental health issues and more.

Primary Care – A student in this area would learn about health maintenance and disease prevention and would interact with a high volume of veteran outpatients.

Qualified nurse preceptors are available in all patient care areas. A qualified preceptor is defined as a Bachelor's prepared nurse who has attended facility sponsored in-depth preceptor training and are positive clinical role models. Additionally, each unit is staffed with a unit based educator who assists with staff education and training.

Our facility received Pathway to Excellence status in 2011. There is shared governance through participation in one of the several nursing councils (Leadership, Practice, Research, and Education) and VALOR nursing students would receive orientation to the functions of each council.

Section C Didactic and Clinical Educational Plan

The VALOR educational plan will consist of a three phase orientation. Students will participate in the medical center's 2-day New Employee Orientation followed by a didactic Clinical Orientation day (Attachment 2). A "Skills Mastery" self-checklist will be used to assess the student's clinical strengths and learning needs. They will then participate in a Unit Specific Clinical Orientation designed to verify nursing skills competency and facilitate a smooth

transition onto the clinical nursing units. The VALOR students will also be involved in individually planned educational opportunities with clinical experts such as respiratory therapy, skin integrity/ wound care nurse, behavioral health CNS, pain management nurse, etc. In addition, students will be exposed to various staff development learning opportunities such as unit based in-services, monthly nursing and medical grand rounds, and other classroom, video, teleconferencing and other continuing education programs occurring on a daily basis.

Didactic Objectives:

The VALOR student will be able to:

1. articulate the mission, vision, values, and multiple functions of VISN 5 and the Veteran Affairs Medical Center, Martinsburg
2. define the organizational structure that contributes to the functioning of Patient Care Services/Nursing
3. develop competence through the demonstration of knowledge and skills in the delivery of nursing care to patients in the assigned clinical areas
4. identify the administrative and clinical systems that promote continuity of patient care

Clinical Objectives:

The VALOR student will be able to:

1. Utilize technical nursing skills in the care of adult patients along the health-illness continuum.
2. Provide patient care using the nursing process to assess, plan, implement, and evaluate the needs of various patient populations.
3. Synthesize the knowledge and skills gained from general education and nursing education and apply it to practice.
4. Participate in collaboration and coordination of patient care issues with pertinent members of the interdisciplinary team.
5. Enhance customer relational and patient communication skills.
6. Observe nursing service committee/council meetings as appropriate
7. Shadow the unit nurse manager to be exposed to nursing administrative issues.

Additional learning objectives will be solicited from each VALOR participant in order to tailor the program to meet the student's individual learning expectations.

Section D Evaluation Plan

Evaluation of the VALOR program will include a survey of the students to assess if clinical and classroom objectives were met and also if clinical instructor and unit preceptor/student relationship was satisfactory. Unit preceptors involved with VALOR students will be given a survey to assess their perspectives of the program. Student, preceptor, and nurse educator

conferences will be conducted on an ongoing basis to assess competency and associated educational needs. (See Attachments 3 and 4)

Section E Request Allocation:

The Martinsburg West Virginia VAMC is requesting a total of three (3) students per funding cycle to be placed in the acute medical-surgical, long term care, and behavioral health areas.

Section F Clinical Instructor Profile

See Attachment 5

Attachment I

Medical Service

Medical Service provides medical care for inpatients on the acute care unit, Ward 4M, as well as the Medical Intensive Care Unit, Ward 4A. Inpatient care on Ward 4M is provided by a team of hospitalists. Sub-Specialists provide medical sub-specialty consultations for inpatients and outpatients.

Medical sub-specialty services are offered in...

- Gastroenterology
- Cardiology
- Hematology/Oncology
- Neurology
- Pulmonary/Critical Care
- Infectious Disease
- Endocrinology
- Dermatology, Nephrology
- Chiropractic
- Rheumatology

The Medical Service physician staff also perform evaluations for Regional Office Exams for veterans applying for compensation and pension.

<http://www.martinsburg.va.gov/services/medical.asp>

Attachment 2

TOPICS COVERED DURING 3 DAYS OF DIDACTIC ORIENTATION

New Employee Orientation

- Medical Center Quadrad's Welcome
- VA Traditions
- Human Resources/Payroll/PPD/Badges
- Computer Security
- Fire and Safety
- Customer Service
- EEO Programs
- Infection Control
- Compliance and HIPPA
- Performance Improvement Issues
- Educational Programs
- Patient Safety
- Tour of Medical Center

Clinical Orientation Day

- Patient Education
- Use of Clinical Pathways
- Infection Control at the Bedside
- Cardiac Arrest and Crisis Action Team
- Restraints and Seclusion
- Skin Integrity and Wound Care
- Documentation of Care
- Age Specific Competencies
- Pain Management
- Nutrition
- Overview of Safe Patient Handling Program
- Enteral Feedings
- Clinical Intranet resources
- Bioethics
- Narcotic Control/Pyxis
- Respiratory Therapy
- Introduction to Nursing Leadership

Unit Based Clinical Orientation

- Introduction to Unit Preceptor
- Guided Self Orientation to the Clinical Unit (Scavenger Hunt)
- Nursing Care Clinical Practice Guidelines
- Design of Patient Care Rooms/Patient Call System
- Nurse Server and Patient Care Routines
- Glucometer Competency
- Vital Signs
- Hill Rom Pressure Control Beds
- Intravenous Infusions
- Patient Safety Lifts and Transfer Devices

Attachment 3
VALOR NURSING STUDENT PROGRAM EVALUATION TOOL

Please return this survey to Lynne Hess, Clinical Educator in 311 : _____

Today's Date _____

Assigned Clinical Unit _____

To help us improve learning opportunities for our future VALOR students please share your thoughts concerning the quality of your clinical experience with us. Circle the number rating on your evaluation from 5 strongly agree, 4 somewhat agree, 3 agree, 2 somewhat disagree, & 1 strongly disagree. There is also additional space for you to write any other comments you may have. Please feel free to use the back if needed. Your honest input is greatly appreciated.

	Strongly Agree	-----	Strongly Disagree		
Classroom and clinical learning objectives were clearly stated	5	4	3	2	1
My individual learning objectives were met	5	4	3	2	1
Staff made me feel welcomed and part of the unit	5	4	3	2	1

Comments: _____

Acquired Knowledge/ Skills:

I have acquired new clinical knowledge/skills through this experience.	5	4	3	2	1
I am more confident in working with patients because of this experience	5	4	3	2	1
I was encouraged to participate in a wide range of learning opportunities	5	4	3	2	1
This clinical experience was challenging enough for me	5	4	3	2	1

Content:

The "Skills Mastery" helped me identify my learning needs	5	4	3	2	1
Orientation to the nursing unit was pertinent to my needs	5	4	3	2	1
Demonstration of unit equipment was sufficient	5	4	3	2	1
Lab practice time on equipment was sufficient	5	4	3	2	1
I had enough additional learning additional Learning opportunities with other nursing clinical experts	5	4	3	2	1

Comments: _____

(see back page)

Organization of the Experience:

The Clinical Instructor spent enough time with me	5	4	3	2	1
The Clinical Instructor was knowledgeable	5	4	3	2	1
My Unit Preceptor spent enough time with me	5	4	3	2	1
My Unit Preceptor was knowledgeable in clinical skills	5	4	3	2	1
This was a satisfying nursing experience for me	5	4	3	2	1

Of the clinical/educational experiences encountered in your VALOR experience, which did you most enjoy?

Of the clinical/educational experiences encountered in your VALOR experience, which did you least enjoy?

How will you use this Valor Student experience toward your future nursing goals?

Comments/Suggestions for future valor students:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your comments are taken very seriously as we aim to make your experience as meaningful as possible.

Attachment 4
MARTINSBURG VAMC

PRECEPTOR EVALUATION OF THE VALOR PROGRAM

1. Did the student meet the stated learning objectives? If not, what prevented this from occurring?
2. List the various types of learning experiences that were provided for the VALOR student?
3. What teaching/learning tools did you utilize to assist the student in gaining identified skills/knowledge to function on your unit?
4. Please describe the contributions made by the VALOR student to patient care.
5. What overall impact did the VALOR program have on your unit?
6. What recommendations do you have that would strengthen the VALOR program?

For the clinical instructor

For the student:

For the preceptor:-

Attachment 5