

VA SALT LAKE CITY HEALTH CARE SYSTEM
Salt Lake City, UT
NURSING VALOR PROGRAM 2017

Introduction

The VA Salt Lake City Veterans Health Care System (SLCVHA) is a 122-bed tertiary care center with nine staffed CBOCs, which serve a veteran population in excess of 200,000 in Utah, southern Idaho, western Colorado, and eastern Nevada, and is the referral center for smaller VAMC's in the Intermountain West. The SLCVHA provides an excellent undergraduate nursing program clinical sight for several Universities in the local area. The Nursing VALOR program is an excellent opportunity for students who have had clinical experience at the VA to gain additional experience as well as affording an opportunity for other students to experience the VA and participate in providing veteran centered care.

Recruitment and Retention

The Nursing VALOR program has been a part of the Salt Lake City VA for over a decade with many success stories. For example, the Assistant Nurse Manager of our large inpatient Acute Medicine Unit is a prior VALOR from 2009. In addition, the Salt Lake City VA has an accredited Nurse Transition to Practice (TTP) program and Office of Academic Affiliations (OAA) funded Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) accredited Post Baccalaureate Nurse Residency Program (PBNR) for which we are an established legacy site. The Nurse VALOR program supports the transition to practice concept as VALOR students secure full time positions at the Salt Lake City VA after graduation. For example, of the 3 VALOR student nurses who graduated in 2016 all were transitioned to full time nursing positions and are a part of the current TTP cohort. From 2004 to 2016 exactly 40 VALOR students gained invaluable clinical experience and 35 of these 40 were hired after graduation. Without the VALOR program our facility's recruitment needs for the past 10 years would have been significantly intensified as VALOR's filled 29 open nursing positions benefiting all 6 of our inpatient units, mental health and the ED. The 88% retention rate of the VALOR students after graduation directly sustains the SLCVHA solution to the problem of recruiting and retaining registered nurses as nursing has been one of the top three hard to recruit positions for 5 years in a row. Current deficiencies include 47 open positions totally 44.75 FTE with limited funding. In essence the VALOR program supports the SLCVHA nurse recruitment and retention strategy.

Clinical Units

Our facility provides a full range of clinical services to the veteran patient. Mental Health services include both inpatient and outpatient services. In addition, the SLCVHA provides inpatient and outpatient substance abuse treatment, a homeless Veteran program, a Mental Health Intensive Case Management program and a Mental Illness Research and Extended Care Center. High volume, high acuity units provide an intense broad based clinical experience in providing veteran centered care. Critical Care service is provided through Medical and Surgical Intensive Care Units, Progressive Care/Telemetry Unit, Acute Medicine Unit, Operating Room, post-surgical care unit and the Emergency Department. Staffing patterns allow the VALOR participant full integration into the assigned unit with multiple staff levels of support. The VALOR experience will include clinical rounds, staff meetings and other professional activities that occur daily, weekly and monthly on the assigned unit.

The three VALOR student nurse trainee (SNT) positions will be assigned to the following units: Emergency Department, Acute Medicine and Inpatient Mental Health (IPU). One student will be assigned to each of these areas. The Emergency Department provides an excellent opportunity for the VALOR SNT to gain experience in patient care and assessment to include essential hands on clinical skills, critical thinking and triage. The Inpatient Mental Health Unit

(IPU) provides a broad range of experiences in caring for veterans in this mission essential care area. This 21 bed unit functions at capacity much of the time caring for veterans in crisis. The VALOR SNT in this setting provides additional care support while gaining invaluable experience in therapeutic communication, patient assessment and critical thinking. The Acute Medicine unit consists of 32 inpatient beds including two hospice rooms. This unit will provide the VALOR SNT with the opportunity to work as a member of the nursing team providing care to inpatient veterans with multiple co-morbidities and high acuity. The VALOR SNT will gain experience with patient assessment, hands on nursing skills, time management and critical thinking.

Didactic and Clinical Educational Plan

Each VALOR participant will work in collaboration with a designated unit education coordinator functioning as the primary mentor, and will be supported by experienced staff nurses, nurse educators, and nurse managers. VALOR students may participate in all unit level educational offerings. The didactic and clinical educational plan is designed to provide a basic clinical experience; the focus is directed toward gaining knowledge, clinical reasoning, and critical thinking. General orientation and ongoing clinical experience will be provided by assigned experienced preceptors. Classroom instruction will be provided through in-services provided by staff members and other professionals throughout the facility.

The comprehensive local VALOR education plan will be individualized for each student, building on strengths and prior student or work experiences with learning opportunities provided for areas that need improvement. The basic standardized education plan involves:

- 8 hours of New Employee Orientation
- 16 hours of New Nurse Orientation
- 4 hours of nurse-specific mandatory computer training
- Precepted clinical orientation profile completion for the specific unit competencies
- Collaboration with the preceptor and the Nurse Manager to tailor the learning experiences to her/his nursing educational needs
- Individualized opportunities are available for observation in specialty units such as ICU, Same Day Surgery, and Ambulatory Care.
- Observation/assisting in program specialties such as respiratory care, wound care, palliative care, and holistic medicine.
- Opportunity to take computerized modules on clinical topics is available.

Objectives:

The VALOR student will be able to:

- Identify patient problems utilizing nursing diagnosis.
- Describe a variety of specific disease entities and patient responses.
- Recognize common complications of treatment or disease progression.
- Identify potential medical and mental health emergencies.
- Discuss current ethical issues related to veteran centered health care.
- Identify, analyze, and resolve a unit-level problem, which leads to significant improvement in the quality of care provided to individual and/or groups of patients.

General orientation will be provided through an established student nurse technician orientation program. Individualized programs will supplement and facilitate entry into the system. The didactic and clinical education plan is designed to provide basic clinical experience with a focus directed toward knowledge synthesis, clinical reasoning, critical thinking, and care of the patient.

The distinctive competency of the unit education coordinator and other experienced nursing staff as mentors is used to guide and role model these elements. Individual career counseling

and ongoing evaluation time with the Project Director will be provided at assigned regular intervals.

Evaluation

Formative and summative methodology will be used for individual and program evaluation. Formative methodology includes an assessment of participant progress toward meeting individual educational goals using an interview process. Interviews will be conducted monthly with each participant and mentor. Summative methodology will include a final joint interview session with each participant and mentor to determine the attainment of overall program goals. In addition, a written performance evaluation will be completed by the unit education coordinator for each VALOR student. VALOR students will also complete a written evaluation of their experiences in the program.

Requested VALOR Positions

We request a total of three (3) funded VALOR SNT positions for the Salt Lake City VA, one for Inpatient Mental Health (IPU), one for Acute Medicine and one for the Emergency Department.

The Program Director will be the Clinical Manager, Center for Learning Excellence.

For additional information or correspondence, please contact the interim director:

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VANAP Nursing Instructor
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Thank you for your consideration.

**Salt Lake City VA VALOR Student Program
Curriculum Outline and Schedule
10-Week Program**

Week 1:

Medical Center Orientation – 1 day

Nursing Orientation – 2 days

Unit Orientation - ongoing

Weeks 2-10:

The VALOR student will be able to:

- Identify patient problems utilizing nursing diagnosis.
- Describe a variety of specific disease entities and patient responses in the acute care and mental health setting.
- Recognize common complications of treatment or disease progression.
- Identify potential medical and mental health emergencies.
- Discuss current ethical issues in the acute care and mental health setting.
- Identify, analyze, and resolve a unit-level problem, which leads to significant improvement in the quality of care provided to individual and/or groups of patients.

Content Outline

1. Introduction to Nursing Care on assigned unit
2. Physical and Mental Health Disease Processes
3. General Nursing management
4. Patient Assessment
5. Treatment of Specific Physical and Mental Health Disorders
6. Veteran Centered Resources available locally and nationally
7. Ethical Issues

VALOR Program Student Education Needs Assessment

Name: _____

Dates of Unit Rotation: _____

Program-Unit Goals / Learning Experience:

Assessment Goals/Learning Experiences	Met	Not Met	Comments
1.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
7.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
8.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Signatures:

VALOR Student: _____ Date: _____

Comments: _____

Unit Education Coordinator / Designee: _____ Date: _____

Comments: _____

Attachment B

VALOR Program Unit Evaluation

Please answer the following by writing your responses:

In what ways did your unit experience assist you in meeting your goals / learning experiences?

In looking back at your unit experience, what additional goals / learning experiences would be appropriate for this rotation?

What could have been done differently to make your unit rotation a more meaningful experience?

Signatures:

VALOR Student: _____ Date: _____

Unit Education Coordinator / Designee: _____ Date: _____

Comments: _____

Nurse Manager: _____ Date: _____

Comments: _____

Return this record directly to the Center for Learning (05HL) by the following date: _____

**VA Salt Lake City Health Care System
Salt Lake City, Utah**

**VALOR STUDENT EVALUATION OF THE UNIT EDUCATION COORDINATOR / DESIGNEE
Unit**

Please rate your orientation and preceptor's performance on the following objectives by checking O for "outstanding," HS for "highly satisfactory," S for "satisfactory," LS for "low satisfactory," and U for "unsatisfactory." Please explain ratings other than satisfactory.

	O (5)	HS (4)	S (3)	LS (2)	U (1)
1. The unit goals, objectives and philosophy were clear to me in the areas of:					
• Clinical Practice					
• Administration					
• Research					
• Education					
2. My learning needs were assessed					
3. The unit orientation supported my needs					
4. The following tools met my learning needs:					
• Competency Skills Checklist (orientation check lists)					
• Reviewing nursing standards of practice and nursing policy/procedure					
• Other					
5. My UEC/preceptor functioned well as a:					
• Role Model					
• Instructor (Clarity of explanations, policies and standards)					
• Resource Person (Providing or locating other resources)					
• Supervisor (Supervision in the clinical area)					
6. I had adequate opportunities to learn by observing my UEC/preceptor in:					
• Delivering Patient Care					
• Interpersonal Skills					
• Collaborative Practice					
7. I had effective communication with my UEC/preceptor					
8. I understand my responsibilities and objectives as a VALOR student					
9. I received encouragement from my UCE/preceptor for independent growth in:					
• Clinical Experience					
• Interpersonal Relationships					
10. I was made to feel a part of the staff					
11. I had constructive feedback and evaluation in a timely manner					

(OVER)

Please answer the following by writing your responses:

In what ways did your UEC/designee excel as a preceptor?

In the future, what could your UEC/designee do to make the preceptorship a more meaningful experience?

What recommendations/suggestions/comments do you have for improving the VALOR Program?

Signatures:

VALOR Student: _____ Date: _____

Unit Education Coordinator / Designee: _____ Date: _____

Comments: _____

Nurse Manager: _____ Date: _____

Comments: _____

Return this record directly to the Center for Learning (05HL) by the following date: _____

**VA Salt Lake City Health Care System
Salt Lake City, Utah**

**UNIT EDUCATION COORDINATOR EVALUATION OF VALOR STUDENT
Unit**

Please rate valor student's performance on the above objectives by checking O for "outstanding," HS for "highly satisfactory," S for "satisfactory," LS for "low satisfactory," and U for "unsatisfactory."

	O (5)	HS (4)	S (3)	LS (2)	U (1)
The VALOR student is able to discuss unit goals, objectives and philosophy.					
The VALOR student has read nursing standards of practice for his/her area and reviewed nursing policy and procedure books and complies with stated standards.					
The VALOR student adequately identified his/her own learning needs and has stated realistic goals and objectives for his/her orientation and first year of practice.					
The VALOR student has demonstrated satisfactory progress toward meeting learning needs, goals and objectives.					
The VALOR student has accepted constructive feedback and is demonstrating changes in his/her practice based on that feedback.					
The VALOR student is able to establish rapport with patients.					
The VALOR student communicates well with co-workers.					
The VALOR student has successfully completed a basic unit rotation.					
The VALOR student, in my opinion, is ready to assume full responsibility in his/her staff role on this unit.					
The VALOR student recognizes and understands the Criteria Based Functional Statement specific to the valor student and unless otherwise stated, understands that behavioral and performance criteria will be evaluated as per its rating scale.					

(OVER)

Please list VALOR Student's Strengths:

Please list VALOR Student's weaknesses and suggestions/opportunities for improvements:

Recommendations to VALOR Student and Nurse Manager

Signatures:

Unit Education Coordinator / Designee: _____ Date: _____

VALOR Student: _____ Date: _____

Comments: _____

Nurse Manager: _____ Date: _____

Comments: _____

Return this record directly to the Center for Learning (05HL) by the following date: _____