

NURSING SHORTAGE REDUCTION PROGRAM STUDY

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Texas Higher Education
Coordinating Board



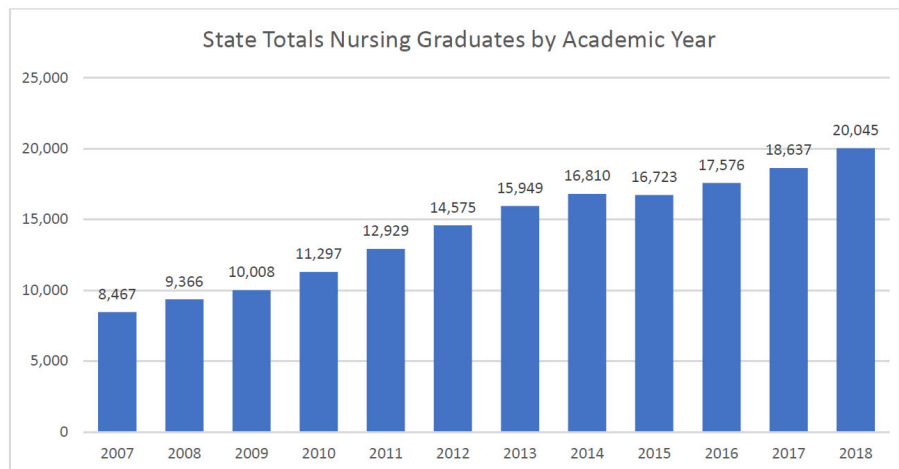
The Nursing Shortage Reduction Program (NSRP) study is required by rider

Background

- General Appropriations Act (Rider 28) calls for a review of the Nursing Shortage Reduction Program (NSRP).
- The rider requires examining the structure and efficiency of the program and considering other state funding strategies to address the nursing shortage.
- Results of this study and any recommendations to improve state efforts to address the nursing shortage are due to the Legislature by November 1, 2020.



Nursing graduates are increasing but not fast enough to keep up with demand



The NSRP study workgroup was established to advise the Coordinating Board

- The workgroup included nursing deans and directors from public and private institutions, state nursing association representatives, THECB staff, and others.
- The workgroup met 6 times from October 2019 to October 2020.
- Workgroup meetings consisted of in-person, virtual, and subgroup meetings.
- *THECB sincerely appreciates the efforts of workgroup members who gave generously of their time and expertise during this challenging time for health professionals.*

Several significant challenges with the current program were identified by the NSRP workgroup

- The program is very complex.
- Budgeting can be problematic.
 - Institutions are required to return advanced funds if they don't meet certain targets; many choose not to expend funds until they are earned.
 - It's hard to hire permanent faculty because funds are not consistent and predictable, and money is not distributed until after the start of the academic year.
- There are not enough qualified instructors to meet demand; qualified students are being turned away.
- There are not enough clinical spaces and insufficient program facilities.

Recommendations were developed for redesigning the current program

Design a program with the following attributes:

- The program is easier to understand and administer than the current program.
- The program provides more consistent and predictable funding than funding provided in the current program.
- Initial licensure nurses and nurse instructors are prioritized, but RN-to-BSN nurses are included.
- One or more measures of quality are included.

Recommendations were developed for redesigning the current program

Design a program with the following components:

- Have one program instead of three.
- Base the program on the increase in the number of nursing graduates.
- Institutions are awarded grants once they have met criteria for increases. Funds would be returned only if spent on non-qualifying expenditures or are not spent within a designated timeframe.
- Include RN-to-BSN because this is a pathway for nursing faculty. However, include an RN-to-BSN funding limit to ensure that initial licensure nurses are strongly prioritized.

Recommendations were developed for redesigning the current program

Design a program with the following components (continued):

- Include additional weighting for graduate degrees earned in areas that lead to instructional credentials for graduates.
- Prioritize one or more metrics that focus on quality, such as NCLEX pass rates.
- Set a maximum award per graduate that varies for each type of graduate (for example, initial, RN-to-BSN, instructor).
- Require institutions to submit a report at the end of the grant period.

Recommendations were developed for redesigning the current program

The following program attributes should remain constant:

- Nursing programs apply every biennium to participate in NSRP.
- Institutions on probation (conditional approval) with the Texas Board of Nursing are not allowed to participate.
- Institutions have discretion in how they spend the funds, provided the expenditures contribute to program goals. Nursing programs should be involved in decision-making regarding expenditures.
- Awards must supplement current nursing program funding (cannot replace existing funding).
- Awards or data submitted under this program are subject to audit by internal and/or external auditors.

Recommendations were developed for redesigning the current program

The following program attributes should be considered:

- Calculate awards based on a two- or three-year rolling average or determine another methodology to smooth increases and enhance predictability.
- Design a schedule that allows for certified data to be used in the calculation process and ensure institutions receive a clear timeline of when applications will be distributed, data submitted and certified, and awards made.

Additional ideas were explored for reducing the nursing shortage

The workgroup discussed ideas to:

- Prioritize nursing instruction, with a focus on hiring and graduating more nursing instructors
- Prioritize growth in initial licensure students
- Prioritize clinical site development, including simulations

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Questions?