

Agenda Item # 14.D.



STATE AND CONSUMER SERVICES AGENCY • ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, GOVERNOR

BOARD OF VOCATIONAL NURSING & PSYCHIATRIC TECHNICIANS
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DATE: February 1, 2010

TO: Board Members

FROM: Anne Powers, Ph.D., R.N.
Nursing Education Consultant

SUBJECT: Medical Career College Vocational Nursing Program – Consideration of Placement on Provisional Accreditation (Director: Mary Pat Bonham, Fremont, Alameda County, Private)

Medical Career College Vocational Nursing Program is presented to the Board for consideration of placement on provisional accreditation.

In accordance with Section 2526.1(c) of the Vocational Nursing Rules and Regulations,

“The Board may place any program on provisional accreditation when a program does not meet all requirements as set forth in this chapter and in Section 2526...”

Section 2530(l) of the Vocational Nursing Rules and Regulations states:

“The program shall maintain a yearly average minimum pass rate on the licensure examination that does not fall below 10 percentage points of the state average pass rate for first time candidates of accredited vocational nursing schools for the same period.

(1) Failure to maintain the required yearly average minimum pass rate for two years or eight consecutive quarters may be cause to place a program on provisional accreditation.”

The following table shows the variance of the program’s pass rates from the state average annual pass rates of first time graduates of accredited vocational nursing programs for the past nine (9) quarters. These data substantiate the program’s noncompliance with Section 2530(l) of the Vocational Nursing Rules and Regulations.

NCLEX-PN® Licensure Examination Pass Rates			
Quarter	State Annual Average Pass Rate	Program Annual Average Pass Rate	Variance from State Annual Average Pass Rate
Jul – Sep 2007	76%	35%	-41
Oct – Dec 2007	76%	36%	-40
Jan – Mar 2008	75%	33%	-42
Apr - Jun 2008	74%	33%	-41
Jul - Sep 2008	74%	29%	-45
Oct – Dec 2008	73%	47%	-26
Jan – Mar 2009	72%	29%	-43
Apr – Jun 2009	70%	35%	-35
Jul – Sep 2009	72%	41%	-31
Oct – Dec 2009	73%	40%	-33

History of Prior Board Actions

- On May 12, 2006, the Executive Officer approved the Medical Career College to begin a vocational nursing program with an initial class of 30 students on June 19, 2006, only, and approved the program curriculum for 1600 hours, including 630 theory, and 970 clinical hours.
- On July 10, 2007, the Board approved initial full accreditation for the Medical Career College Vocational Nursing Program for the period from July 10, 2007, through July 9, 2011, and issued a certificate accordingly.

The Board approved the Medical Career College Vocational Nursing Program to admit a full-time class of 30 students on August 20, 2007, only, to replace students graduating on August 8, 2007.

The Board also approved the program’s request to admit a second full-time class of 30 students on October 1, 2007, only, with a projected graduation date of October 31, 2008.

- On February 27, 2008, the Board approved the Medical Career College Vocational Nursing Program’s request to admit 30 students on March 17, 2008, only, with an anticipated graduation date of May 8, 2009.
- On June 4, 2008, the Board approved the Medical Career College Vocational Nursing Program’s request to admit 30 students on July 14, 2008, only, with an anticipated graduation date of August 21, 2009.

- On October 8, 2008, the Executive Officer approved the Medical Career College Vocational Nursing Program to **replace** a full-time morning class of 15 students on December 1, 2008, only, with an anticipated graduation date of January 29, 2010.

The Executive Officer also approved the Medical Career College Vocational Nursing Program to **replace** a full-time evening class of 15 students on December 1, 2008, only, with an anticipated graduation date of January 29, 2010.

- On November 13, 2008, the Board representative notified the program director that the pass rates for the Medical Career College Vocational Nursing Program had fallen below 10 percentage points of the state average pass rate for the past four quarters. The Board requested a written plan for improving the program's NCLEX-PN® pass rates by December 13, 2008.

The director stated that the program is requiring completion of the ATI tool as part of the program's curriculum review and NCLEX-PN® preparation process. The program hired consultants to work with faculty on professional development issues.

- On March 18, 2009, the Board representative notified the program director that the pass rates for the Medical Career College Vocational Nursing Program have fallen below 10 percentage points of the state average pass rate for the past five (5) quarters. The Board requested a copy of the program's detailed plan for improving the NCLEX-PN® pass rates, the date the plan was implemented, and the effectiveness of the employed interventions. This information was due on April 2, 2009.

The director stated that the program received feedback that students were not following ATI requirements for completion of the Virtual ATI products that were added. The program switched to another review product offered by ATI, and students met with program consultants to review individualized reports regarding their progress. The program re-assigned faculty and hired an assistant director in efforts to strengthen student instruction.

- On April 21, 2009, the Board representative notified the program director that the pass rates for Medical Career College Vocational Nursing Program have fallen below 10 percentage points of the state average pass rate for the past six quarters. The current annual pass rate is 47%. The Board representative requested documentation verifying that the elements of the program's plan of correction are being carried out. The program was asked to send a full listing of student names, and specific documentation showing how each student met the admissions, screening and selection criteria for admission to the program. The documentation was due by May 21, 2009, but was not received.

On July 15, 2009, the director stated "As part of our plan of correction, we replaced Instructors, enhanced our curriculum and were working on creating an Admissions Committee and new policies to be submitted for approval. Once approved, we are

looking forward to a more successful student population, and once approved for our next class we plan on instituting and having an ongoing evaluation of improvement regarding our newly approved policies.”

On July 16, 2009, the director sent evidence that all students meet the admissions, screening and selection criteria.

- On August 19, 2009, the Board notified the program that the pass rates for the Medical Career College Vocational Nursing Program had fallen below 10 percentage points of the state average pass rate for seven (7) consecutive quarters. The consultant requested submission of an analysis of the effects of the program improvement plan.
- On September 3, 2009, the Executive Officer denied the program’s request for admission of a class of 30 students on September 21, 2009, with a projected graduation date of November 30, 2010, to **replace** students that graduated on May 1, 2009. This denial is based upon an annual pass rate of 29%.

The Executive Officer approved the program’s admission of a class of 15 students on September 21, 2009, only, with a projected graduation date of November 30, 2010, only, to **replace** students that graduated on May 1, 2009.

The Executive Officer denied the program’s request for admission of a class of 30 students on September 21, 2009, with a projected graduation date of November 30, 2010, to **replace** students that graduated on August 21, 2009. This denial is based upon an annual pass rate of 29%, and historical Executive Officer approval of class sizes of 15 students.

The Executive Officer approved the program’s admission of a class of 15 students on September 21, 2009, only, with a projected graduation date of November 30, 2010, only, to **replace** students that graduated on August 21, 2009.

- On October 12, 2009, Mary Pat Bonham was approved as director.

Enrollment

The full-time program is 53 weeks in length. The program requires prior approval for each class admission.

The following table represents **projected** student enrollment based on current and proposed class starts and completions. The table indicates **a maximum enrollment of 89 students** for the period from December 2008 through September 2009.

ENROLLMENT DATA				
CLASS DATES		#Students Admitted	#Students Current or Completed	Total Enrolled
Start	Complete			
12/08 am		14	14	14
12/08 pm		15	15	14+15 = 29
9/09 am		30 (proposed)		29+30 = 59
9/09 pm		30 (proposed)		59+30 = 89

Licensing Examination Statistics

The following statistics, furnished by Pearson VUE, and published by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing as "Jurisdictional Summary of All First-Time Candidates Educated in Member Board Jurisdiction," for the period January 2008 through December 2009, specify the pass percentage rates for graduates of Medical Career College Vocational Nursing Program on the National Council Licensure Examination for Practical/Vocational Nurses (NCLEX-PN®).

NCLEX-PN® Licensure Examination Data						
Quarterly Statistics					Annual Statistics*	
Quarter	# Candidates	# Passed	% Passed	State Quarterly Pass Rate	Program Average Annual Pass Rate	State Average Annual Pass Rate
Jan - Mar 2008	5	2	40%	75%	36%	75%
Apr - Jun 2008	1	0	0%	70%	33%	74%
Jul - Sep 2008	1	0	0%	74%	33%	74%
Oct - Dec 2008	No tests	NA	NA	73%	29%	73%
Jan - Mar 2009	13	7	54%	70%	47%	72%
Apr - June 2009	20	6	30%	71%	29%	70%
July-Sep 2009	31	13	42%	74%	41%	72%
Oct - Dec 2009	11	4	36%	76%	40%	73%

The Annual Pass Rate changes every quarter. It is calculated by dividing the number of candidates who passed during the current and previous three-quarters by the number of candidates who tested during the same period.

Based on the most recent data available (October to December 2009), the program's average annual pass rate is 40%. The California average annual pass rate for

graduates from accredited vocational nursing programs who took the NCLEX-PN® for the first time during the same period is 73%. The pass rate for the Medical Career College Vocational Nursing Program is 33 percentage points below the state average annual pass rate.

Faculty and Facilities

Section 2534(d) of the Vocational Nursing Rules and Regulations states:

"For supervision of clinical experience, there shall be a maximum of 15 students for each instructor."

The total number of Board-approved faculty is 13, including the program director. The director has full-time administrative duties. Of the total faculty, ten (10) are approved to teach in the clinical area.

For a maximum enrollment of 89 students, six (6) instructors are needed. Therefore, the number of faculty is adequate for the current and proposed enrollment.

Section 2534(b) of the Vocational Nursing Rules and Regulations states:

"Schools shall have clinical facilities adequate as to number, type, and variety of patients treated, to provide clinical experience for all students in the areas specified by Section 2533. There must be available for student assignment, an adequate daily census of patients to afford a variety of clinical experiences consistent with competency-based objectives and theory being taught."

The program's clinical facilities are adequate as to type and variety of patients treated to enable current and proposed students to meet clinical objectives in accordance with Section 2534(b) of the Vocational Nursing Rules and Regulations. This information has been verified by the consultant.

Other Considerations

Section 2530(l) of the Vocational Nursing Rules and Regulations states,

"The program shall maintain a yearly average minimum pass rate on the licensure examination that does not fall below 10 percentage points of the state average pass rate for first time candidates of accredited vocational nursing schools for the same period."

Violation: The program has failed to maintain a yearly average minimum pass rate on the licensure examination that does not fall below 10 percentage points of the state average pass rate for first time candidates of accredited vocational nursing schools for the same period, for nine (9) quarters.

Recommendations:

1. Place the Medical Career College Vocational Nursing Program on provisional accreditation for the two-year period from February 18, 2010, through February 17, 2012, and issue a notice to the program to identify specific areas of noncompliance and requirements for correction as referenced in Section 2526.1 (e) of the California Code of Regulations (see Attachment A Draft).
2. Require the program to show documented progress by submitting a follow-up reports in 10 and 22 months. The report must include a comprehensive analysis of the program, specific actions taken to improve program pass rates, timelines for expected results, and the effectiveness of corrective actions taken to address the following elements:
 - a. Current Student Enrollment.
 - b. Admission Criteria.
 - c. Screening and Selection Criteria.
 - d. Terminal Objectives.
 - e. Curriculum Objectives.
 - f. Instructional Plan.
 - g. Theory and Clinical Objectives for Each Course.
 - h. Lesson Plans for Each Course.
 - i. Textbooks.
 - j. Attendance Policy.
 - k. Remediation Policy.
 - l. Evaluations of Theory and Clinical Faculty.
 - m. Evaluations of Theory Presentations.
 - n. Evaluations of Clinical Rotations and Their Correlation to Theory Presentations.
 - o. Evaluation of Student Achievement.
3. Require the program to comply with all accreditation standards in article 4 of the Vocational Nursing Practice Act, commencing at Business and Professions Code section 2880, and article 5 of the Board's regulations, commencing at California Code of Regulations, title 16, section 2525.

Rationale: The Board has serious concerns relative to the program's non-compliance with regulations relative to pass rate on the NCLEX-PN[®] for the last eight (8) quarters.

Attachment A – Notice of Change in Accreditation Status Draft.