

Agenda Item #14.B.



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: Cheryl C. Anderson, M.S., R. N.
Supervising Nursing Education Consultant

SUBJECT: Coast Health Education Center, Inc., Vocational Nursing Program –
Reconsideration of Provisional Accreditation (Director: Oscar De Jesus,
Anaheim, Los Angeles, Private)

Coast Health Education Center, Inc., Vocational Nursing Program is presented to the Board for reconsideration of its provisional accreditation. The program's status was changed to provisional accreditation on December 8, 2008. That action was taken due to the program's noncompliance with Section 2530 (I) of the Vocational Nursing Rules and Regulations, which 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 **14** quarters. This data substantiates the program's continued noncompliance with Section 2530(I) of the Vocational Nursing Rules and Regulations.

| NCLEX-PN® Licensure Examination Pass Rates | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Quarter | State Average Annual Pass Rate | Program Average Annual Pass Rate | Variance from State Average Annual Pass Rate |
| Apr - Jun 2006 | 79% | 50% | -29 |
| Jul - Sep 2006 | 79% | 38% | -41 |
| Oct - Dec 2006 | 78% | 38% | -40 |
| Jan - Mar 2007 | 77% | 38% | -39 |
| Apr - Jun 2007 | 77% | 35% | -42 |
| Jul - Sep 2007 | 76% | 27% | -49 |
| Oct - Dec 2007 | 76% | 41% | -49 |
| Jan - Mar 2008 | 75% | 42% | -33 |
| Apr - Jun 2008 | 74% | 41% | -33 |
| Jul - Sep 2008 | 74% | 41% | -33 |
| Oct - Dec 2008 | 73% | 43% | -30 |
| Jan - Mar 2009 | 72% | 40% | -32 |
| Apr - Jun 2009 | 70% | 44% | -26 |
| Jul - Sep 2009 | 72% | 52% | -20 |

History of Prior Board Actions

- On February 4, 2005, the Board approved the Coast Health Educational Center, Inc. to commence a full-time vocational nursing program with an initial class of 30 students beginning February 7, 2005, with a projected graduation date of February 3, 2006.

The program offers a 48-week full-time course of instruction divided into four semesters.

- On May 21, 2005, the director informed the Board that admission of the first class was delayed to March 21, 2005, with an expected graduation date of March 28, 2006.
- **On October 25, 2005, a new program director was approved.**
- On January 11, 2006, the Board approved initial full accreditation for the Coast Health Educational Center, Inc. Vocational Nursing Program for the period of February 4, 2006, through February 3, 2010, and issued a certificate accordingly.

The Board approved the program's request to admit 45 students into a full-time class beginning April 17, 2006, to replace the class graduating on March 17, 2006. In so doing, the program's class size was increased from 30 to 45 students per class.

Additionally, the Board approved the program's request to admit 45 students into a third full-time class beginning July 24, 2006, with a projected graduation date of July 21, 2007. In so doing, the program's frequency of admissions was increased.

- On November 2, 2006, the Board approved the program's request to admit an additional class of 45 students commencing November 16, 2006, with a projected graduation date of November 30, 2007.
- On April 12, 2007, the Board approved the program's request to admit a class of 45 students commencing April 30, 2007, with a projected graduation date of April 11, 2008, to replace students graduating April 27, 2007, and admit a class of 45 students commencing July 23, 2007, with a projected graduation date of July 10, 2008, to replace students graduating July 20, 2007. Additionally, a follow-up report was to be presented relative to the program's licensure examination pass rates.
- The program had no candidates completing the National Council Licensure Examination for Practical/Vocational Nurses (NCLEX/PN) from January - June 2007.
- On June 27, 2007, the Board notified the program that the pass rates for Coast Health Educational Center Vocational Nursing Program had fallen below 10 percentage points of the state average pass rate for **four** (4) consecutive quarters. The Board requested an analysis of the program and written plan for improving program pass rates.
- On July 20, 2007, the Board received the program's plan to improve its performance statistics on the NCLEX-PN®.
- On August 20, 2007, the Board notified the program that its pass rates had fallen below 10 percentage points of the state average pass rate for **five** (5) consecutive quarters.
- On December 14, 2007, the Board notified the program that its pass rates had fallen below 10 percentage points of the state average pass rate for **six** (6) consecutive quarters.
- On December 18, 2007, the program advised that admission of the class scheduled to commence July 23, 2007, was delayed until August 2007.
- On January 9, 2008, the Board approved the program's request to admit a full-time class of 20 students commencing January 21, 2008, only, with a projected graduation date of January 8, 2009.
- The program delayed commencement of the January 21, 2008 class to February 11, 2008.
- On February 13, 2008, the Board notified the program that its pass rates had fallen below 10 percentage points of the state average pass rate for **seven** (7) consecutive quarters. The Board requested a report relative to the program's current enrollment,

faculty and facilities, student clinical rotation schedule, and analysis relative to the effectiveness of the previously submitted corrective plan.

- On March 7, 2008, the Board received the program's plan of intervention addressing program performance statistics on the NCLEX-PN®.
- On March 26, 2008, the program advised that effective April 1, 2008, the name of the program would change to Coast Health Career College, Vocational Nursing Program.
- On May 6, 2008, the Board notified the program that its pass rates had fallen below 10 percentage points of the state average pass rate for **eight** (8) consecutive quarters.
- On May 7, 2008, the program submitted correspondence summarizing effects of interventions employed to improve performance statistics on the NCLEX-PN®.
- On May 21, 2008, the Board approved the program's request to admit a full-time class of 15 students commencing June 16, 2008, only, with a projected graduation date of June 26, 2009, to replace students graduating May 2, 2008; and approved the admission of a full-time class of 15 students on September 15, 2008, only, with a projected graduation date of September 22, 2009, to replace students graduating August 18, 2008.
- On June 12, 2008, the Board was notified that the start of the June 16, 2008 class would be delayed to July 14, 2008, due to an insufficient pool of qualified applicants.
- On June 19, 2008, the Board received notification of the resignation of four (4) approved faculty. Additionally, **the Board was notified of the program director's resignation, effective July 2, 2008.**
- On June 20, 2008, the Board forwarded correspondence to the program director requesting information relative to the program's status. A response was requested by June 30, 2008.
- On June 24, 2008, the Board forwarded correspondence to the program's owner requesting information relative to the program's status, due to the imminent departure of the director. A response was requested by June 30, 2008.
- On June 30, 2008, the program submitted the requested information.
- On July 15, 2008, the Bureau forwarded correspondence advising the program's owner of deficiencies identified in faculty approval applications for a director and assistant director.

- On September 12, 2008, a report for consideration of the program's placement on provisional accreditation was presented to the Advisory Committee. The program was not represented at this meeting.

Committee members expressed concern that a program representative was not available to provide information prior to the Committee's vote on the matter of accreditation. Following discussion, the Committee adopted the following recommendations:

1. Place Coast Health Career College Vocational Nursing Program on provisional accreditation for a ninety-day period.
2. Carry this issue forward for review at the November 2008 Advisory Committee meeting for further action with a representative of the school present.

On September 26, 2008, these recommendations were adopted by the designee of the Director of the Department of Consumer Affairs.

- On October 3, 2008, the Bureau forwarded written notification, by certified mail, relative to the change in the program's accreditation status, areas of noncompliance, and requirements for correction. Additionally, the owner was reminded that the program was noncompliant with Section 2529(b) of the Vocational Nursing Rules and Regulations. The owner was advised that reconsideration of the program's accreditation status was scheduled for November 21, 2008. Receipt of notification was confirmed by the United States Postal Service.
- **On October 27, 2008, a new program director was approved.**
- On November 7, 2008, the Bureau recommended extension of the program's provisional accreditation through February 28, 2010. Additionally, the Bureau recommended issuance of a notice to the program identifying specific areas of non-compliance and requirements for correction as referenced in Section 2526.1 (e) of the California Code of Regulations.
- On December 8, 2008, these recommendations were adopted by the designee of the Director of the Department of Consumer Affairs.
- On December 8, 2008, the Board issued the program a notice identifying areas of non – compliance and requirements for corrections.
- On October 20, 2009, the Executive Officer approved the program's request to admit a full – time class of 15 students to commence November 9, 2009 only, graduating December 17, 2010, to replace students who graduated July 30, 2009.

- On December 24, 2009, the Board forwarded correspondence to the program advising that the Board would reconsider its accreditation status at the February 18, 2010 meeting. A comprehensive report was requested by January 14, 2010.
- On January 12, 2010, the Board received the program's comprehensive report.
- On January 13, 2010, the director clarified that commencement of the November 9, 2009 class would be delayed to January 18, 2010, due to insufficient funding. The students are projected to graduate February 18, 2011.

Enrollment

The program offers full – time classes that are 60 – weeks in length. Each class admission requires prior Board approval. The pattern of admissions for current classes is seen in the enrollment table below.

The following table represents **current and projected** student enrollment based on current and proposed class start dates. The table indicates a **maximum enrollment of 27 students** for the period **July 2008 through February 2011**.

| ENROLLMENT DATA | | | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| CLASS DATES | | #Students Admitted | #Students Current or Completed | Total Enrolled |
| Start | Completed | | | |
| 7/08 | | 15 | 14 | 14 |
| 4/09 | | 15 | 12 | 14 + 12 = 26 |
| | 8/09 (7/08 Class) | | -14 | 26 – 14 = 12 |
| 1/10 (Projected) | | 15 | | 12 + 15 = 27 |
| | 5/10 (4/09 Class) | | -12 | 27 - 12 = 15 |
| | 2/11 (1/10 Class) | | - 15 | 15 – 15 = 0 |

Licensing Examination Statistics

The following statistics, furnished by the 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 April 2006 through September 2009, specify the pass percentage rates for graduates of the Coast Health Education Center 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 |
| Apr - Jun 2006 | 4 | 2 | 50% | 76% | 50% | 79% |
| Jul - Sep 2006 | 17 | 6 | 35% | 79% | 38% | 79% |
| Oct - Dec 2006 | 3 | 1 | 33% | 77% | 38% | 78% |
| Jan - Mar 2007 | No Candidates Tested | | | 77% | 38% | 77% |
| Apr - Jun 2007 | No Candidates Tested | | | 74% | 35% | 77% |
| Jul - Sep 2007 | 12 | 3 | 25% | 76% | 27% | 76% |
| Oct - Dec 2007 | 20 | 10 | 50% | 76% | 41% | 76% |
| Jan - Mar 2008 | 25 | 11 | 44% | 75% | 42% | 75% |
| Apr - Jun 2008 | 19 | 7 | 37% | 70% | 41% | 74% |
| Jul - Sep 2008 | 15 | 4 | 27% | 74% | 41% | 74% |
| Oct - Dec 2008 | 22 | 13 | 59% | 73% | 43% | 73% |
| Jan - Mar 2009 | 11 | 3 | 27% | 70% | 40% | 72% |
| Apr - Jun 2009 | 7 | 4 | 57% | 71% | 44% | 70% |
| Jul - Sep 2009 | 10 | 6 | 60% | 74% | 52% | 72% |

*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 (July – September 2009), the program's average annual pass rate is 52%. 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 72%. The average annual pass rate for the Coast Health Education Center Vocational Nursing Program is twenty (20) 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 six (6), including the program director. The director has 100% administrative duties. Of the total faculty, six (6) are approved to teach in the clinical area.

Based on a maximum enrollment of 27 students, two (2) instructors are needed. Therefore, the number of current faculty is **adequate** for the current and projected 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 has clinical facilities that 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.

Other Considerations

Examination statistics furnished by the 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,” substantiates that Coast Health Education Center Vocational Nursing Program has failed to achieve an annual average pass rate on the NCLEX-PN[®] that is within 10 percentage points of the state average annual pass rate for the period April 2006 through September 2006. As such, the program was in violation of section 2530(l) of the Vocational Nursing Rules and Regulations for 14 quarters.

On June 27, 2007, the assigned consultant notified the director that pass rates for the Coast Health Education Center Vocational Nursing Program had fallen more than 10 percentage points below the state average annual pass rate for four (4) quarters. The director was requested to complete a thorough analysis of the program, identify factors negatively impacting student achievement, and develop a written plan for improving program pass rates. That plan was received on July 20, 2007.

On August 20, 2007, the consultant notified the director that program pass rates had fallen more than 10 percentage points below the state average annual pass rate for five (5) consecutive quarters. On December 14, 2007, the consultant notified the director that program pass rates had fallen more than 10 percentage points below the state average annual pass rate for six (6) consecutive quarters.

On February 13, 2008, the consultant notified the director that program pass rates had fallen more than 10 percentage points below the state average annual pass rate for seven (7) consecutive quarters. The consultant requested the director to submit a report relative to the program’s current enrollment, faculty, facilities, student clinical rotation schedule, and analysis relative to the effectiveness of the previously submitted corrective plan.

On March 7, 2008, the program submitted the requested information. The director confirmed implementation of the submitted plan of correction. The following interventions were reported.

1. Increased consistency in adherence to program admission criteria.
2. Revised admission criteria to include a minimum Career Programs Assessment Test (CPAT) score of 80%. Previously, a score of 75% was required.
3. Added requirement for English fluency.
4. Reduction in the size of each admitted class to 15.
5. Addition of theory and clinical quizzes and examinations per unit with a goal of earlier identification and intervention for students with performance deficits.
6. Implementation of instructor evaluations and in-service relative to teaching strategies and methodologies.

On May 6, 2008, the consultant notified the director that program pass rates had fallen more than 10 percentage points below the state average annual pass rate for eight (8) consecutive quarters. The director was requested to provide information relative to the effectiveness of interventions employed to address its performance statistics. On May 7, 2008, the program submitted correspondence summarizing effects of interventions employed to improve performance statistics on the NCLEX/PN[®].

On June 19, 2008, the Board was notified of the resignation of four (4) faculty. Additionally, notification was received of the director's termination effective July 2, 2008.

On October 27, 2008, a new program director was approved.

On November 7, 2008, the Advisory Committee recommended that the program's status be changed to provisional accreditation. That recommendation was adopted by the Director of the Department of Consumer Affairs on December 8, 2008. Subsequently, the status of the program was changed from full accreditation to provisional accreditation for the period September 12, 2008 to February 28, 2010. **The program was placed on the agenda for the February 2010 Board meeting for reconsideration of the program's accreditation status.** On December 8, 2008, the Board issued the program a notice identifying areas of non-compliance and requirements for corrections. (See Attachment A)

On October 20, 2009, the program was approved to admit a full – time class of 15 students to commence November 9, 2009 only, graduating December 17, 2010 to **replace** students who graduated July 30, 2009. That action was taken pursuant to Section 2526.1 of the California Code of Regulations. The consultant recommended that the director complete a comprehensive analysis of the program to identify all elements negatively impacting student achievement and revise its plan to improve program NCLEX/PN[®] performance statistics.

In December 2009, correspondence was forwarded to the director advising that the program's accreditation status would be reconsidered by the Board on February 18, 2010. A comprehensive report was requested.

On January 12, 2010, the Board received the requested information. The director reported that the following steps had been implemented to address the program's low performance statistics.

1. Admission Criteria.

The program has revised its admission criteria to include a requirement that all applicants complete the Test of Essential Academic Skills (TEAS) entrance examination prior to admission.

2. Evaluation Methodology for Student Progress.

- a. The program revised its grading procedure. Students are required to achieve a grade of 80%. Previously, the passing grade was 75%.
- b. The program now administers ATI assessment tests and other on line testing aids. Based on the results, intensive remediation will be undertaken for each student.

3. Class Size.

The program has reduced the number of admissions from 45 to 15 students per class.

4. Adequacy of Instructional Methods.

The director reported that an evaluation of all faculty members has been completed. A number of instructors were identified as failing to provide the level and quality of theory and clinical instruction necessary conducive to student achievement. As a result, faculty were terminated and new instructors hired.

In summary, from April 2006 through September 2007, the program's average annual pass rate declined substantially, from 50% to 27%, 49 percentage points below the state average annual pass rate. On December 8, 2008, the program's average annual pass rate was 41%, 33 percentage points below the state average annual pass rate. Based on the July – September 2009 statistics, the program's average annual pass rate is 52%. As such, the average annual pass rate for the Coast Health Education Center Vocational Nursing Program is twenty (20) percentage points below the state average annual pass rate for the current quarter.

Recommendations:

1. Extend provisional accreditation of Coast Health Education Center Vocational Nursing Program for the one-year period from March 1, 2010 through February 28, 2011, and issue a notice to the program to identify specific areas of non compliance

and requirements for correction as referenced in Section 2526.1 (e) of the California Code of Regulations (see Attachment B Draft).

2. Require the program to show documented progress by submitting a follow-up report in 9 months. The report must include a comprehensive analysis of the program, specific actions taken to improve program pass rates, timeline for implementation, and the effect of employed interventions. The following elements must be addressed in the analysis:
 - 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 program has not demonstrated full compliance with Article 5 of the California Code of Regulations. To be fully accredited, the program must 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. By February 2011, the Board will have four (4) additional quarters of data to assess the program's status.

Attachment A: Notification of Change in Accreditation Status Dated December 8, 2008
Attachment B: Notification of Change in Accreditation Status Draft