

## Requiring National Nursing Accreditation: Strategies for BONs

Given recent calls for innovations in nursing education and for nurses to advance their level of education (Benner et al., 2010, Committee, 2011, NCSBN, 2009, NCSBN, 2010), the BONs' desires to consider a new model for the future (NCSBN, 2011), and the dialogue that took place at NCSBN's 2011 World Café meeting (NCSBN, 2012b), the time is ripe for BONs to work toward harmonizing their approval processes with national nursing accreditors.

Based on the evidence reviewed, NCSBN has recommended requiring national accreditation by 2020 (NCSBN, 2012a). This date is in line with the Institute of Medicine's Future of Nursing report, which recommends increasing the proportion of nurses with a baccalaureate degree to 80 percent by 2020 (Committee, 2011). If nurses from practical, associate degree or diploma programs graduate from nonaccredited programs, it will be more difficult, and sometimes impossible, for them to further their education.

In order for BONs to begin the process of requiring accreditation, below are the recommendations from NCSBN's Nursing Education Committee and suggestions for moving forward:

1. All BONs will have statutory authority over nursing programs.
2. All prelicensure nursing programs will be accredited by a national nursing accreditation agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education by 2020.
3. It is helpful for each BON to crosswalk their rules/regulations with NLNAC's and CCNE's standards. NCSBN has some example crosswalks from other jurisdictions that can be shared.
4. BONs will still conduct initial approval of visits. Initial approval will include a feasibility study. The latter is specified in NCSBN's Model Education Rules.
5. BONs may accept national nursing accreditation for continued approval and would use accreditation self studies to decrease redundancy, though BONs may require additional data. BONs might make site visits for continued approval, when deemed necessary.
6. For continued approval BONs will require the programs to share specified documents/reports with them. Suggested reports to require include:
  - a. From CCNE: Program self studies, program annual reports, continuous improvement progress reports (CIPR), substantive change notification and the action letter. If a BON decides to require team reports, it should also require program responses. See Overview of the CCNE Accreditation Process (Appendix VII) for a description of these reports.
  - b. From NLNAC: Program self studies, program annual reports, accreditation team letter, and substantive change reports. See Overview of the NLNAC Accreditation Processes (Appendix VIII) for a description of these reports.
7. If site visits are made for continued approval, it is recommended that they be made jointly with national nursing accreditors. BONs and accreditors making joint visits should refer to the Guidelines for Joint Prelicensure Nursing Program Visits (Appendix VI).
8. To reduce redundancy, it is recommended that BONs use program annual reports, though BONs may require additional data.

### References

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