

PURPOSE

The purpose of the newsletter is to introduce the Capacity Building for Internationally Educated Nurses Assessment (CBIA) Project and inform stakeholders about the development of a competency based assessment service for Internationally Educated Nurses (IENs). This newsletter will be published in January, May and September.

WHAT IS CBIA?

The CBIA Project is a three year project, funded by Health Canada, designed to build the capacity of all jurisdictions within the Western and Northern Health Human Resources Planning Forum (the Forum) to undertake effective and standardized assessments of IENs utilizing the process developed by Mount Royal College, Calgary, Alberta, and the College and Association of Registered Nurses of Alberta.



this issue

Purpose of the Newsletter

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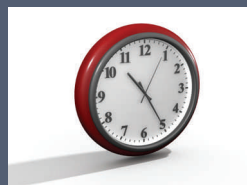
Why CBIA?

To help address the nursing shortage in Canada: According to a 2002 study by the Canadian Nurses Association, if we continue with past workforce utilization patterns of Registered Nurses (RNs), Canada will experience a shortage of 78,000 RNs by 2011 and 113,000 RNs by 2016. It is acknowledged that there are many IENs residing in Canada who can help to fill some of the projected nursing vacancies and help jurisdictions to meet the health care needs of our communities.

Utilizing the skills and knowledge developed and used for a number of years by Mount Royal College in Calgary and the College and Association of Registered Nurses of Alberta, the CBIA project provides for the transfer of "best practice" for the building of capacity to develop competency assessment services in each of the participating jurisdictions. Competency assessment services are based on the principles of Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) and give IEN applicants an opportunity to demonstrate the knowledge, skills and abilities acquired through life, work and formal learning experiences. PLAR is acknowledged as a key educational innovation that helps to facilitate the progression of learning, and meet urgent labor market demands. A PLAR process provides a method by which an IEN applicant's ability to meet entry-to-practice registered nursing competencies can be reliably assessed and relevant supplementary education can be recommended if required, enabling the successful integration of IENs into the health workforce.

Project Timeline

October 1st, 2007
to
March 31st, 2010



Addressing
the nursing
shortage in
Canada!



PROJECT PARTNERS

Project partners include: Ministries of Health and Advanced Education, regulatory colleges, selected post-secondary nursing institutions, representatives from health authorities/regions from jurisdictions represented in the Forum, which includes the four western provinces and three northern territories:

- British Columbia
- Alberta
- Saskatchewan
- Manitoba
- Yukon
- Northwest Territories
- Nunavut

Our Objectives

- Support the development of Competency Assessment services for IENs in each participating jurisdiction
- Support the development of processes and procedures to provide IENs consistent Competency Assessment services among participating provinces and territories
- Assess the competencies of IENs who meet the selection criteria in each participating jurisdiction against the entry to practice competencies of nurses in Canada
- Maintain an appropriate level of security for IEN assessment tools and bridging processes
- Establish an inter-jurisdictional governing body of regulators to oversee the development of consistent selection criteria and assessment tools across the western and northern regions
- Work towards a pan-Canadian approach to IEN assessment
- Facilitate the linking of assessment services with educational bridging programs in order to optimize the successful integration IENs into the current health workforce
- Recommend the development and delivery of appropriate educational programs for IENs, delivered by academic institutions, and supported by education ministries in each jurisdiction

What We Have Accomplished so Far

- Shared the Mount Royal College Assessment Model with participating jurisdictions
- Received funding from Provincial governments in all participating jurisdictions and from Health Canada for implementation of the Competency Assessment Model
- Established new IEN Assessment Services that will provide Competency Assessments in BC (Kwantlen Polytechnic University), in Saskatchewan (Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology -SIAST) and in Manitoba (Health Sciences Centre – HSC)
- Considered supportive processes in the Yukon to enable IENs the opportunity to access Competency Assessment services in another province or territory.
- Developed links to supplementary education programs for IENs in BC, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. (These links were previously in place in AB).
- Developed an inter-jurisdictional group of regulatory bodies that is creating recommendations for a common approach for providing competency-based assessment services to IENs.

What's Next?

- CBIA will continue to work towards a pan-Canadian approach to IEN assessment
- CBIA is determining interest in a regional governance body to oversee the assessment model

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