

**Recommendations from the Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research Report**

The Sheps Center report *A Study of Associate Degree Nursing Program Success* presentation to the State Board of Community Colleges on October 16, 2008, made several recommendations to the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) and the North Carolina Board of Nursing (NCBON) in standardizing performance measures. They were:

- A uniform method should be used by the NCBON and the NCCCS to calculate retention rates.
- The NCBON and the Community College System should explore whether first-time pass rate is the best measure of performance.
- Performance measures that evaluate graduation rates should reflect student body characteristics. Performance measures should account for the service population characteristics so as not to penalize those programs serving populations at the core of the community college system's mission. Risk adjustment should include the following student characteristics: age, gender, race/ethnicity, education, Pell Grant status, part-time/full-time enrollment status and socioeconomic characteristics.

In follow-up to the Sheps Report there are two recommendations that we request Programs Committee members review:

First, the North Carolina Community College System will utilize the same methodology as the North Carolina Board of Nursing in evaluating the passing rates of our nursing graduates. Based on the Administrative Code 21 NCAC 36 .0320 (e) The nursing program shall maintain a three year average at or above 95 percent of the national pass rate for licensure level pass rate on first writing of the licensure examination for calendar years ending December 31. For example, based on the 2006-2008 National Pass Rate for Registered Nursing Programs the average was 87 percent and ninety-five percent of this average would be 83 percent. In this instance, this would require all community colleges below 83 percent to prepare a plan of correction for both the NCBON and the NCCCS.

Second, the North Carolina Community College System will begin evaluating graduation rates of the colleges reflective of student body characteristics. Performance measures should account for service population characteristics. Risk adjustment is essential for a fair comparison of programs. Risk adjustment as stated in the study should include : age, gender, race/ethnicity, education, Pell grant status, part-time/full-time enrollment status and socioeconomic characteristics of ZIP code of residence, including rurality, poverty level, educational attainment, and proportion of active duty military. This data is available from student records housed at the NCCCS. The statistical method to calculate the Risk Adjusted Graduation Rate (RAGR) has been developed by the Sheps Center.

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