**GLOSSARY**

**Academically Qualified** – Documented current or recent direct engagement in a significant manner in the teaching of nurse residents; program educators and nurse administrators must hold all educational qualifications required by the sponsoring/governing organization, the state, and the sponsoring/governing organization’s accrediting agency.

**Administrative Capacity** – The actual capabilities and resources available to the sponsoring/governing organization and unit that directly support the mission and purpose of the sponsoring/governing organization and the mission and purpose of a unit in the achievement of a transition to practice program’s end-of-program learning outcomes/role-specific competencies and program outcomes.

**Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN)** – A clinical nurse specialist, nurse practitioner, certified registered nurse anesthetist, or certified nurse midwife.

**Alternative Methods of Delivery** – Methods of delivering a transition to practice program or course/module that differs from traditional in-person/in-a-classroom instructional methods, including a variety of non-traditional means of interaction between nurse residents and program educators, length required for a transition to practice program, and/or varying intervals of class and/or clinical schedules. Examples include, but are not limited to, instructional television (ITV), DVD/podcast learning packages, and online delivery. See distance education definitions below.

**Branch Campus** – A site of a sponsoring/governing organization that is geographically separate from and independent of the main campus/location of the sponsoring/governing organization. A site is independent of the main campus/location if the campus/location:
- is permanent in nature;
- offers courses in educational transition to practice program leading to a degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential;
- has its own program educators and administrative or supervisory organization; and
- has its own budgetary and hiring authority.

**Candidate Status/Candidacy** – Candidate status is granted after a review of the potential of a transition to practice program to achieve ACEN accreditation. Candidacy does not constitute pre-accreditation as defined by the U.S. Department of Education.

**Chief Executive Officer (CEO)** – The official who has the primary responsibility of carrying out the mission and purpose of the sponsoring/governing organization. In some circumstances there may be an overall sponsoring/governing organization CEO and a local CEO (e.g., a chancellor of a university/college system and a president of a college; a healthcare system CEO and healthcare agency CEO).

**Closing Report** – A written plan developed by a sponsoring/governing organization that provides for the equitable treatment of nurse residents if a sponsoring/governing organization ceases to operate the program or ceases to operate the program at a site before all nurse residents have completed the transition to practice program. The Closing Report may include a teach-out agreement between sponsoring/governing organizations/units. This applies to the closure of a
sponsoring/governing organization, an off-campus/location instructional site, or a branch campus. The Closing Report requires ACEN approval in advance of implementation.

**Competent** – having the necessary and sufficient ability, knowledge, skill, and experience to do something successfully and/or achieve a purpose.

**Consortia Relationship** – Typically one in which two (2) or more sponsoring/governing organizations/units share the responsibility for developing and delivering transition to practice program courses/modules or a transition to practice program, in whole or part.

**Contemporary Nursing Practice** – Professional nursing knowledge, skills, and behaviors that are based on current research and professional standards of the present time.

**Contractual Agreement** – Typically, one in which a transition to practice program enters into an agreement for receipt of courses/modules or portions of courses/modules delivered by another sponsoring/governing organization or service provider.

**Core Values** – Those beliefs or ideals that form the foundation for the work of a sponsoring/governing organization and/or unit.

**Criteria** – Statements that identify the elements that need to be examined in evaluation of a standard.

**Curriculum Integrity** – Demonstration of the soundness of a transition to practice curriculum that develops from the mission/philosophy in an organized manner across a sequence of courses/modules. The mission/philosophy and selected professional standards, guidelines, and competencies result in the program educators identifying end-of-program learning outcomes/role-specific competencies that are specific and measurable and progress throughout the curriculum. The end-of-program learning outcomes/role-specific competencies organize the curriculum, guide the delivery of instruction, direct learning activities, and are used to evaluate nurse residents.

**Default Rate** – The rate of nurse resident/transitioning nurse borrowers who fail to remain current on their loans.

**Delivery Formats** – Methods used to transfer knowledge, skills, and behavior from program educators to nurse residents. Methods include, but are not limited to, traditional in-person/in-a-classroom techniques (e.g., lecture and “flipped classroom”) and the use of synchronous and asynchronous technologies (e.g., online and simulation).

**Distance Education**

**Asynchronous Learning** – Learning and instruction that do not occur in the same place or at the same time.

**Distance Education** – An educational process in which the majority of the instruction occurs when a nurse resident/transitioning nurse and program educator are not in the same place. Instruction may be synchronous or asynchronous. Distance education may employ audio, video, and/or computer technologies and includes technology that is used to support
regular and substantive interactions between a program educator and a nurse resident/transiting nurse.

**Distance Technology** – Instructional methods that may include one-way or two-way transmissions, audio, video, the Internet, and/or computer technologies.

**Hybrid/Blended Course/Module** – A course/module whose content is delivered both in-person/in-a-classroom and via distance education; 1% to 49% of the traditional in-person/in-a-classroom time is replaced with work via distance education, typically delivered asynchronously. The component delivered via distance education includes learning activities that reduce the time traditionally spent in the in-person/in-a-classroom component.

**Hybrid/Blended Transition to Practice Program** – A transition to practice program is delivered both in-person/in-a-classroom and via distance education; 1% to 49% of the credit hours or 1% to 49% of the clock hours of a transition to practice program courses/modules are delivered in-person/in-a-classroom, and the remaining credit hours or clock hours are delivered via distance education, typically delivered asynchronously. The component delivered via distance education includes learning activities that reduce the time traditionally spent in the in-person/in-a-classroom component.

**Online/Internet Course/Module** – A form of distance education whereby 50% to 100% of a transition to practice program courses/modules content is delivered primarily online and asynchronously.

**Online Transition to Practice Program** – A form of distance education whereby 50% to 100% of the credit hours or 50% to 100% of the clock hours of a transition to practice program courses/modules are delivered primarily online and asynchronously.

**Synchronous Learning** – Learning and instruction that occur at the same time and in the same place.

**Diversity Concepts** – Knowledge about persons, communities, regions, countries, cultures, and ethnicities other than one’s own.

**Due Process** – A disciplined, analytical decision-making procedure in which relevant standards are applied by a properly constituted and authorized body using a method that is based on published rules of procedure and is free of improper influence.

**Employee Retention Rate** – Percentage of nurse residents who are retained by the employer. The definition used by the ACEN for a transition to practice program employee retention rate is the number of nurse residents who remain employed with the employer from enrollment in the first transition to practice course/module for the period of time specified by the program educators; program must provide a rationale for the expected level of achievement (percentage) set.

**Evidence-Based** – Actions, processes, or methodologies that are grounded in and flow from the translation of substantive and current research.

**Expected Level of Achievement** – A measurable index that reflects a desired outcome.
**Experientially Qualified** – Documented current or recent direct engagement in a significant manner in clinical nursing experiences for those whose role includes teaching; for those engaged in administration, documented current or recent direct engagement in a significant manner in administrative functions in nursing education; program educators and nurse administrators must hold all experiential qualifications required by the sponsoring/governing organization, the state, and the sponsoring/governing organization’s accrediting agency.

**Full-time Program Educators** – *See Program Educators*

**Gatekeeper** – A person or agency that is responsible for monitoring a sponsoring/governing organization’s compliance with the Higher Education Reauthorization Act Title IV.

**Geographic Region** – In reference to the substantive change process, an area serving the same/similar population of nurse residents and communities as the original/main campus/location of a transition to practice program, an off-campus/location instructional site, or a branch campus.

**Geographically Separate** – An off-campus/location instructional site or branch campus that is located physically apart from the main campus/location of the sponsoring/governing organization.

**Good Cause** – Sufficient grounds to extend the accreditation at the conclusion of a transition to practice program’s maximum monitoring period, which results in Continuing Accreditation with Warning for Good Cause. A transition to practice program’s accreditation can be extended for good cause if a transition to practice program satisfies all of the principles for good cause.

**Graduate Degree** – A master’s degree or doctoral degree.

**Grievance** – A formal allegation against a transition to practice program, typically expressed as a written, signed statement. A grievance is a wrong or hardship suffered that is the grounds for a complaint; the formal expression of a grievance is a complaint. A transition to practice program’s record of grievances must include all complaints filed since initial accreditation or reaccreditation, whichever was the last accreditation site visit.

**Inactivation of an Off-Campus/Location Instructional Site** – A period of time during which a unit does not offer a transition to practice program and/or transition to practice courses/modules at a site. The maximum period of time that an off-campus/location instructional site may be inactive is three (3) calendar years.

**Inactivation of a Transition to Practice Program**: A period of time during wherein no new nurse residents are admitted into a transition to practice program; therefore, there will be no nurse residents completing the transition to practice program for an intervening period of time.

A unit may inactivate a transition to practice program for up to one (1) calendar year after the last nurse resident/transitioning nurse completes the transition to practice program. If a unit does not reactivate a transition to practice program within the period of time specified then the transition to practice program is considered closed and removed from the list of accredited
programs. To restart the transition to practice program, the unit must reapply for accreditation with ACEN.

**Information Literacy** – The ability to identify what information is needed for a specific purpose and to access, evaluate, and use all forms of information in achieving that goal.

**Instructional Technology** – The method(s) and delivery system(s) used by program educators to convey course content to nurse residents.

**Interprofessional** – Sharing of information among two (2) or more healthcare professionals working together as a team with a common purpose and mutual respect.

**Job Placement Rate** – Percentage of nurse residents employed in a position for which a transition to practice program prepared them; program must provide a rationale for the expected level of achievement (percentage) set.

**Learning Experiences** – Planned learning activities that are sufficient and appropriate to achieve the end-of-program learning outcomes/role-specific competencies, and/or program outcomes, and are overseen by qualified program educators who provide feedback in support of learning.

**Letter of Notification** – A letter from the nurse administrator of a transition to practice program, or his/her designee, to the ACEN Chief Executive Officer summarizing a substantive change and pertinent information thereto appertaining.

**Location** – Site where a transition to practice program is delivered, in whole or part, including the main campus/location, off-campus/location instructional site(s), and branch campus(es).

**Mission/Philosophy** – The sponsoring/governing organization and/or unit statement that designates fundamental beliefs and characteristics and provides guidance and direction for a transition to practice program(s) and services offered.

**Nurse Administrator** – The individual with responsibility and authority for the administrative and instructional activities of a unit and transition to practice program(s) within the sponsoring/governing organization.

**Off-Campus/Location Instructional Site** – Any site that is physically apart from the main campus/location of the sponsoring/governing organization where a transition to practice program is offered, in whole or part.

**Outcome** – A statement that reflects the achievement of an identified goal.

**Course/Module Learning Outcomes/Objectives** – Statements of learner-oriented expectations written in measurable terms that express the knowledge, skills, or behaviors that the nurse resident/transiting nurse should be able to demonstrate upon completion of the course/module. Course/module learning outcomes/objectives must be consistent with standards of contemporary nursing practice.

Course/module learning outcomes/course objectives
End-of-Program Learning Outcomes/Role-Specific Competencies – Statements of learner-oriented expectations written in measurable terms that express the knowledge, skills, or behaviors that nurse residents should be able to demonstrate upon completion of a transition to practice program. End-of-program learning outcomes/role-specific competencies must be consistent with standards of contemporary nursing practice.

End-of-program learning outcomes/role-specific competencies
- are driven by established professional standards, guidelines, and competencies
- provide the framework for all curricular matters
- represent the point of transition from being a recent graduate from a nursing education program prepared as an entry-level practitioner for the chosen level of nursing education to being a nurse independently assuming the responsibilities of stated roles in leadership, professional development and safe clinical practice in contemporary healthcare environments.

Program Outcomes – Measurable indicators that reflect the extent to which the purposes of a transition to practice program are achieved and by which program effectiveness is documented.

The ACEN specifies and requires the assessment of the following transition to practice program outcomes: program satisfaction, program completion, employee retention, and job placement (if applicable). The assessment of additional program outcomes is the choice of the governing organization and nursing education unit.

Partnership – An agreement (formal relationship) between a sponsoring/governing organization and an outside agent/agency to accomplish specific objectives and goals over a period of time.

Part-time Program Educators – See Program educators

Practice Learning Environments – Settings that facilitate nurse residents’ application of knowledge, skills, and behaviors in the care of patients/clients/etc. and support the end-of-program learning outcomes/role-specific competencies and program outcomes. Settings include, but are not limited to, acute-care and specialty hospitals, long-term care facilities, ambulatory care centers, physician offices, and community and home health care.

Practice Learning Experiences – Direct hands-on, planned learning activities with appropriate patients/clients/etc., interactions with the interprofessional team, and interactions with the
patient's/client's/etc. family and friends that are sufficient and appropriate to achieve the end-of-program learning outcomes/role-specific competencies, and/or program outcomes, and are overseen by qualified program educators who provide feedback in support of learning.

**Preceptor** – An academically and experientially qualified person who has received formal training to function as a resource and role model for nurse residents.

**Prerequisite Course/Module** – A course/module that is required prior to enrolling in another course/module.

**Professional Standards/Guidelines for Nursing Practice** – A set of guidelines approved by a nationally recognized organization for use in the development and evaluation of a transition to practice curriculum. The most recent version/edition of the standards/guidelines must be used. The standards/guidelines include, but are not limited to:

- Core Competencies for Interprofessional Collaborative Practice© (Interprofessional Education Collaborative)
- Criteria for Evaluation of Nurse Practitioner Programs
- Duchscher’s Stages of Transition Theory©
- Health Professions Education: A Bridge to Quality© (Institute of Medicine)
- Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice© (American Nurses Association)
- Standards of Practice and Educational Competencies for the Licensed Practical/Vocational Transition to practice program (National Association for Practical Nurse Education and Services)
- Statement on Clinical Nurse Specialist Practice and Education© (National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists)
- Quality and Safety Education for Nurses (QSEN) Competencies

**Program Completion Rate** – Percentage of nurse residents who complete a transition to practice program within a period of time determined by the program educators. The definition used by the ACEN for a transition to practice program completion rate is the number of nurse residents who complete the program from enrollment in the first transition to practice course/module within the period of time specified by the program educators; program must provide a rationale for the expected level of achievement (percentage) set. The program must provide a rationale for the expected level of achievement (percentage) set.

**Program Coordinator** – A person(s) assigned a range of administrative/coordinating responsibilities to assist the nurse administrator in the fulfillment of the goals of the unit and achieving a transition to practice program’s end-of-program learning outcomes/role-specific competencies and program outcomes.

**Program educators** – Individuals who teach and evaluate nurse residents, are academically qualified, and experientially qualified in the content areas in which they teach. See definition of Nurse Administrator and Transition to Practice Program Coordinator.

- **Full-time Program Educators** – Persons who teach and/or evaluate nurse residents, have a full-time program educator’s employment status at the sponsoring/governing organization, and whose current primary workload responsibilities are teaching and/or evaluating nurse residents in a transition to practice program.
• **Part-time Program Educators** – Persons who teach and/or evaluate nurse residents, have a program educator’s appointment that is less than a full-time status at the sponsoring/governing organization, and whose current primary workload responsibilities are teaching and/or evaluating nurse residents in a transition to practice program.

**Program Educator’s Development** – Activities that facilitate a program educator’s maintenance or enhancement of expertise. Examples include, but are not limited to, certification, continuing education, formal advanced education, clinical practice, research, publications, and other scholarly activities.

**Program Educator’s Workload** – Percentages of time that reflect the manner in which the sponsoring/governing organization and/or unit characterizes, structures, and documents the nature of a program educator’s teaching and non-teaching responsibilities. Workload duties include, but are not limited to, teaching, advisement, administration, committee activity, service, practice, research, and other scholarly activities.

**Program Length** – Total number of credit/quarter-clock hours required to complete the defined transition to practice program allocated over a specific period of time (semester/trimester/quarter/weeks); a transition to practice program is inclusive of all prerequisite and transition to practice program courses/modules required.

**Program Outcomes** – See Outcomes

**Program Satisfaction Rate** – Percentage of nurse residents who express satisfaction with a transition to practice program within a defined period of time; program must provide a rationale for the expected level of achievement (percentage) set.

**Published Documents** – All written forms of communication distributed by a transition to practice program and/or sponsoring/governing organization, including paper and electronic sources intended to inform the public.

**Reactivation of a Transition to Practice Program** – After a period of inactivity, the process of admitting new nurse residents into a transition to practice program. If a unit does not reactivate a transition to practice program within one (1) calendar year then the transition to practice program is considered closed and removed from the list of accredited transition to practice program.

**Reactivation of an Off-Campus/Location Instructional Site** – After a period of inactivity, the process of offering a transition to practice program courses/modules at an approved off-campus/location instructional site. If a unit does not reactivate the off-campus/location instructional site within three (3) calendar years of no nurse residents being enrolled and no transition to practice program courses/modules being offered at the off-campus/location instructional site, then the transition to practice program must follow the substantive change process to reinstate the off-campus/location instructional site.
Resources, Fiscal – The financial support required for securing the personnel, supplies, materials, equipment, and services necessary to ensure the achievement of the end-of-program learning outcomes/role-specific competencies and program outcomes.

Resources, Learning – The materials, activities, and technologies that facilitate the development of nurse residents’ knowledge, skills, and behaviors necessary to ensure the achievement of the end-of-program learning outcomes/role-specific competencies and program outcomes.

Resources, Physical – Equipment, classrooms, laboratories, offices, and other common spaces used by the nurse residents enrolled in a transition to practice program and the program educators teaching the transition to practice program courses/modules that are necessary to ensure the achievement of the end-of-program learning outcomes/role-specific competencies and program outcomes.

Role-Specific Competencies – Expected, measurable levels of complete a transition to practice program performance that integrate knowledge, skills, and behaviors. Competencies may include, but are not limited to, specific knowledge areas, clinical judgments, and behaviors based upon the role and/or scope of practice of the complete the transition to practice program.

Scholarship – Activities that facilitate the enhancement of a program educator’s expertise and support the achievement of the end-of-program learning outcomes/role-specific competencies and program outcomes. These include, but are not limited to, application of knowledge, teaching, service, practice, and research.

Single Transition to Practice Program – Determination of whether a transition to practice program is a single transition to practice program offered at a different site(s) or actually multiple transition to practice programs depends on several factors as described below.

Method of Delivery

1. Face-to-Face Mode of Delivery: When 50% or more of the didactic component of a transition to practice program is offered in a traditional in-person/in-a-classroom mode of delivery and when 50% or more of the laboratory component (when applicable) of a transition to practice program is offered in a traditional in-person/in-a-laboratory mode of delivery, a transition to practice program and all sites where the transition to practice program is offered must be in the same state. The ACEN retains the right to determine whether a transition to practice program is a single transition to practice program and whether a site at which a transition to practice program is offered must hold separate accreditation.

2. Distance Education Mode of Delivery: When 50% or more of the didactic component of a transition to practice program is offered through a distance education mode of delivery, it is possible for a transition to practice program and all sites where the transition to practice program is offered to be in the same state or in different states. The ACEN retains the right to determine whether a transition to practice program is a single transition to practice program and whether a site at which a transition to practice program is offered must hold separate accreditation.
A transition to practice program is a single transition to practice program when all of the following criteria are met:

- The transition to practice program is within a single sponsoring/governing organization that is accredited through a sponsoring/governing organizational accrediting agency recognized by the ACEN.
- The transition to practice program is located only on a sponsoring/governing organization’s main campus/location and/or off-campus/location instructional site(s).
- There is one (1) transition to practice curriculum for each transition to practice program option offered by the single sponsoring/governing organization.
- There is one (1) set of end-of-program learning outcomes/role-specific competencies and program outcomes utilized for the transition to practice program offered by the single sponsoring/governing organization.
- There is a systematic evaluation plan in place that addresses the end-of-program learning outcomes and program outcomes for the transition to practice program offered by the single sponsoring/governing organization.
- There is one (1) nurse administrator for the transition to practice program.
  - The nurse administrator must have continuous, active, daily, and personal responsibility and authority at all sites for the transition to practice program.
  - The nurse administrator must continually have adequate time and resources on a daily basis at all sites to administer the transition to practice program.
  - The nurse administrator must oversee the daily sponsoring/governing organization, unit, and transition to practice program matters such as, but not limited to, personnel matters, nurse resident/transitioning nurse matters, curricular matters, and resources matters.
- All transition to practice program and unit personnel at all sites must report to the nurse administrator.
- There is one (1) group of program educators for the transition to practice program that continually function as a “faculty of the whole” on a daily basis through their organization and decision-making processes and continually have input into the curriculum development, delivery, and evaluation.
- There is a single set of policies governing all nurse residents enrolled in the transition to practice program that is established by a single sponsoring/governing organization and a single unit.

The ACEN retains the right to determine whether a transition to practice program is a single transition to practice program and whether a site at which a transition to practice program is offered must hold separate accreditation.

**Single Unit** – The unit within a sponsoring/governing organization that offers a transition to practice program; all transition to practice program within a unit must be administered by a single individual with the responsibility and authority for all transition to practice program. If a sponsoring/governing organization elects to have a different nurse administrator for one (1) or more transition to practice program, then each transition to practice program with a different nurse administrator is a separate unit. The ACEN retains the right to determine whether a unit is a single unit.
Sponsoring/governing organization – The entity with overall responsibility and authority for a unit and a transition to practice program (e.g., university, college, hospital/medical center, career center).

Staff – Personnel who facilitate the attainment of the goals and outcomes of a unit, including clerical and other support persons. Staff do not include program educators or the nurse administrator.

Stakeholder – Any individual or group with an interest in but no direct responsibility for the development or delivery of a transition to practice program (e.g., clients/patients, non-nurse residents, non-program educators, healthcare providers, and citizens).

Standard – Agreed-upon expectations to measure quantity, extent, value, and educational quality.

Sufficient – Enough or adequate for the purpose of achieving the end-of-program learning outcomes/role-specific competencies and program outcomes.

Sufficient Full-Time Program Educators – Typically reflected by (1) the ratio of the number of full-time program educators to the total number of full-time and part-time nurse residents enrolled in all transition to practice program courses/modules required for a transition to practice program or programs; (2) the required full-time program educators workload; (3) the number of full-time program educators on overload and amount of overload for each full-time program educators; and (4) non-teaching responsibilities required by the sponsoring/governing organization and/or unit.

Sustainability of Resources – The capacity of the sponsoring/governing organization to continue financial, human, and physical resources at a sufficient level to ensure end-of-program learning outcomes/role-specific competencies and program outcomes can be achieved.


Teach-Out Agreement – A written agreement between sponsoring/governing organizations that provides for the equitable treatment of nurse residents and a reasonable opportunity for nurse residents to complete a transition to practice program if a sponsoring/governing organization/unit, or a transition to practice program site that provides 50% or more of a transition to practice program offered, ceases to operate before all enrolled nurse residents have completed the transition to practice program. This applies to the closure of a sponsoring/governing organization, an off-campus/location instructional site, a branch campus, or a transition to practice program. A teach-out agreement requires ACEN approval in advance of implementation.

Title IV Gatekeeper – A person or agency that is responsible for monitoring a sponsoring/governing organization’s compliance with the Higher Education Reauthorization Act Title IV.
Value-Based Care – Employing safe, appropriate, and effective care evidence-based care that takes into account a patient’s/clients’/etc. wishes and preferences with enduring results and at reasonable cost for the patient/client/etc.; Quality over Cost over Time.