Quality and Public Trust

QUALITY: The standard of something as measured against other things of a similar kind; the degree of excellence of something.

PUBLIC TRUST: Confidence created for the promotion of public benefit overall, not specific individuals.

Ensuring Quality and Public Trust – Two Approaches

- In the United States there are two primary structures in place to ensure quality nursing education – state regulatory processes and nursing program accreditation.
- State regulatory processes are usually mandatory for a program to operate in the state, depending on state laws and/or regulations.
- Accreditation is usually voluntary and ensures that the program meets standards of educational quality specific to nursing education.

Ensuring Quality and Public Trust – Two Approaches

While both processes are designed to protect the public and ensure educational quality in preparation for the safe practice of nursing, the approach of each process is different, yet complementary.
Mission of Board of Nursing: Public Protection

- Education
  - Ensure that the education program meets the requirements to fulfill its obligations to protect the public.
  - Approval process for nursing programs
- Licensing
  - Ensure that the graduate meets the requirements for licensure.
- Practice
  - Establish legal frameworks for scope of practice within a state through the State's Nurse Practice Act.

Key Components of Approval

- The key components are similar to accreditation components
  - The Governing Entity
  - Program Leadership
  - Faculty
  - Curriculum
  - Clinical Learning Experiences
  - Physical and Fiscal
  - Evaluation Plan
  - Students*

What is Accreditation?

Accreditation is a peer-review, self-regulatory process by which non-governmental associations recognize educational institutions or nursing programs that have been found to meet or exceed standards and criteria for educational quality.
Why Accreditation?

Accreditation assists in the further improvement of institutions or nursing programs as related to resources invested, processes followed, and results achieved.

ACEN Mission and Purpose

MISSION: The Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing supports the interests of nursing education, nursing practice, and the public by the functions of accreditation.

PURPOSE: To provide specialized accreditation for all levels of nursing education offered by domestic and international institutions in various educational settings.

ACEN Purpose

To provide specialized accreditation for transition-to-practice programs:

- The ACEN accredits non-credit transition-to-practice programs at all levels of nursing practice.
- The ACEN accredits transition-to-practice programs offered by employers in a variety of settings including academic institutions (e.g., hospitals, rehab centers, colleges/universities).
ACEN Goals
As the leading authority in nursing accreditation, the goal of the ACEN is to be a supportive partner in strengthening the quality of nursing programs and transition-to-practice programs through:

• Supporting nursing programs and transition-to-practice programs in obtaining and maintaining accreditation
• Promoting peer review
• Advocating for self-regulation
• Fostering quality, equity, access, opportunity, mobility, and preparation for practice, or transition-to-practice, at all levels of nursing preparation
• Developing standards and criteria for accreditation

ACEN: The Leading Authority for Nursing Education Accreditation

• Original and most experienced nursing accrediting agency for establishing expected standards of nursing educational quality.

• ACEN nursing program graduates represent the overwhelming majority of newly licensed nurses annually.

Benefits of ACEN accreditation for Students

• Provides further useful information for students’ career and education decision making
• Enables student eligibility for funding support from federal agencies (e.g., Title IV, HRSA)
• Further enables eligibility for funding support from some state agencies and foundations
• Further facilitates transfer of credits
• Further facilitates employment as required by many employers (e.g., Veterans Affairs, U.S. Military)
Benefits of ACEN accreditation for Students

- Further bridges a gap as many undergraduate and graduate nursing programs require students to be from an accredited nursing program for admission (e.g., RN-to-BSN, RN-to-MSN, RN-to-DNP)
- Further facilitates academic progression partnerships as a partnership may require students to be from an accredited nursing program (e.g., dual enrollment)

Benefits of Accreditation for Faculty and Communities of Interest

- Provides recognition that the nursing program or school has been evaluated and periodically re-evaluated by a qualified, independent group of peer evaluators and the extent to which the nursing program meets appropriate educational purposes and standards of educational quality specific to nursing education.
- Further fosters on-going, self-examination, re-evaluation, and focus on the future.
- Further heightens faculty members’ and administrators’ awareness and responsiveness to areas needing improvement.

Facts About Accreditation

- As of August 2019, accreditation is required by some state regulatory agencies.
  - Currently 25 states, DC, and U.S. Virgin Islands require
  - Currently more states are working on requiring
  - NCSBN is advocating for all BONs to require by 2020
- NCSBN study (January 2018) found the 2016 first-time pass rate for:
  - accredited associate degree nursing programs was 86%
  - unaccredited associate degree nursing programs was 72%
Does Accreditation Make a Difference?

• For graphs illustrating the NCLEX pass rate data for first time test takers attending ACEN-Accredited programs, please visit https://www.acenursing.org/nclex-pass-rate-data/

The ACEN Initial and Continuing Accreditation Process

Initial and Continuing Accreditation

Initial accreditation is the first peer review process for a candidate nursing program seeking accreditation with the ACEN.

Once a nursing program has been granted initial accreditation, continuing accreditation is the cyclical peer review process for an accredited nursing program to maintain accreditation with the ACEN.

The first continuing accreditation peer review process occurs five years after initial accreditation is granted and then every eight years thereafter, and may occur more often.
MS47 interactive bells and whistles?
Marsal Stoll, 6/24/2019

KN241 I recommend making this a part of the interactive slides about the Site Visit Types with buttons for just "Initial Accreditation", "Continuing Accreditation", "Focused Visit", "Follow-Up Visit"; that way we are not "reading" the script to them. That said, this script seems to be missing the second of "two" reasons... I think i have the correct information added.
Keri Nunn-Ellison, 6/18/2019
Step 1: Self-Study

Purpose of Self-Study Report

- Demonstrate the extent to which the nursing program is in compliance with Standards and Criteria that are being reviewed by peer evaluators
- Clear, complete, concise, accurate, relevant representation of the nursing program
- Describe the nursing program as it will be at the time of the site visit including:
  - Location(s) where nursing students are physically present for didactic and laboratory components of nursing courses (e.g., main campus and/or off-campus instructional site)
  - Method(s) of delivery (e.g., traditional education, hybrid education, distance education)
  - All program options (e.g., pre-licensure, LPN-to-RN, RN-to-BSN, Post-Master’s Certificates, DNP Specialist Certificate, etc.)
MS48 interactive bells and whistles
Marsal Stoll, 6/24/2019
Step 2: The Site Visit
The first level of peer review

Accreditation Site Visit – First Level of the Peer Review Process

- A site visit is conducted by peer evaluators from the same type of nursing program (e.g., associate, master’s, diploma, practical, etc.).
- Peer evaluators
  - Conduct an independent analysis and make professional judgments on the nursing program’s compliance with all the Standards and Criteria, and the findings are documented in their reports.
  - Ensure the consistent application of the Standards and Criteria thus, ensuring consistent accreditation recommendation.

The Site Visit

The Site Visit

Resources:
- Physical Facilities
  - Classrooms
  - Faculty Offices
  - Library/Learning Center
  - Technology
- Learning Resources
  - On- and Off-Campus
  - Practice Learning Environments
- Support Services
  - Administration
  - Student Services
  - Nursing Education
  - Public

Peer Evaluators

Review of Facilities and Equipment

Peer Evaluators’ Analysis of Findings

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS
Strengths, Areas Needing Development, Areas of Non-compliance

Recommendation to your Board of Commissioners
KN252 I wonder if this is another opportunity for an interactive tool?
Keri Nunn-Ellison, 6/18/2019
Overview of ACEN Accreditation

Findings By Peer Evaluators – All Levels

• Compliance
  • Peer evaluators found sufficient evidence that the nursing program is currently in compliance with a Standard.

• Area Needing Development
  • Peer evaluators found sufficient evidence that the nursing program is currently in compliance with a Standard.
  • However, evidence also demonstrates that an opportunity for improvement to enhance the quality of the nursing program related to one or more Criterion.

• Non-Compliance
  • Peer evaluators found that evidence demonstrates a nursing program is not in compliance with a Standard.
  • Peer evaluators found a lack of evidence demonstrates a nursing program is in compliance with a Standard.

Accreditation Recommendation – Initial and Continuing Accreditation Site Visit

• Initial Accreditation
  • Grant or Deny

• Continuing Accreditation
  • Continuing
  • Continuing with Conditions
  • Continuing with Warning
  • Deny Continuing Accreditation

Step 3: Evaluation Review Panel

The second level of peer review
MS51 interactive bells and whistles
Marsal Stoll, 6/24/2019
Evaluation Review Panel (ERP): Second Level of the Peer Review Process

- Composed of peer evaluators from the same nursing program type (e.g., associate, diploma, practical, master’s)
- Composed of peer evaluators that did not visit the nursing program
  - Conducts their own independent analysis of the evidence (e.g., Self-Study Report (SSR), Site Visit Report (SVR), NARF and additional information as applicable) and make their own professional judgment regarding compliance with the Standards and Criteria
  - Ensures the consistent application of the Standards and Criteria among the nursing programs reviewed on that panel
  - Ensures consistent recommendations among the nursing programs on that panel

Accreditation Recommendation

- Initial Accreditation
  - Grant or Deny
- Continuing Accreditation
  - Continuing
  - Continuing with Conditions
  - Continuing with Warning
  - Deny Continuing Accreditation

Step 4: Board of Commissioners

Third and final level of the peer review process
Overview of ACEN Accreditation

**Board of Commissioners (BOC): Third and Final Level of the Peer Review Process**

- Composed of nurse educators, nurse clinicians, and public members elected by ACEN accredited nursing programs
- Commissioners conduct their own independent analysis of the evidence from the nursing program’s Self-Study Report (SSR), Site Visit Report (SVR), NARF, ERP findings/recommendation, and additional information (as applicable)
- Based on their professional judgement, your Board of Commissioners makes the accreditation decision
  - Ensures the consistent application of the Standards and Criteria among all nursing programs
  - Ensures consistent decisions among all nursing programs

**Accreditation Decision**

- Initial Accreditation
  - Grant or Deny
- Continuing Accreditation
  - Continuing
  - Continuing with Conditions
  - Continuing with Warning
  - Continuing for Good Cause
  - Deny Continuing Accreditation

**BOC Decision: Initial Accreditation or Continuing Accreditation**

- Initial Accreditation
  - The decision to grant initial accreditation means the Board of Commissioners found sufficient evidence that the nursing program was compliant with all Standards.
  - Time Frame: Five (5) years

- Continuing Accreditation (at the customary cycle)
  - The decision to grant continuing accreditation means the Board of Commissioners found sufficient evidence that the nursing program was compliant with all Standards.
  - Time Frame: Eight (8) years
KN267 This may be another good one to make interactive.
   Keri Nunn-Ellison, 6/19/2019

KN268 I would recommend that we let Alex/Blu play with slides 59-68 to see how we can make this more interactive using our new tools.
   Keri Nunn-Ellison, 6/19/2019
Monitoring Time Frame Based on Nursing Program Length: Conditions, Warning or Good Cause

Per USDE Regulation and ACEN Policy #4:

- The maximum monitoring period for continuing accreditation with conditions, warning, or good cause for clinical doctorate, master’s, baccalaureate, associate, and diploma nursing programs is two (2) years from the Board of Commissioners’ determination of this accreditation status.
- The maximum monitoring period for continuing accreditation with conditions, warning, or good cause for practical nursing programs is 18 months from the Board of Commissioners’ determination of this accreditation status.

Monitoring Time Frame: Conditions, Warning, or Good Cause

- Regardless of the amount of time the Board of Commissioners grants, the monitoring time frame is from Board of Commissioners decision to Board of Commissioners decision.
  - For example:
    - Continuing Accreditation with Conditions, Warning, or Good Cause for one year is granted in March 2020 therefore, the Board of Commissioners will make the next accreditation decision in March 2021
    - Continuing Accreditation with Conditions, Warning, or Good Cause for 18 months is granted in March 2020 therefore, the Board of Commissioners will make the next accreditation decision in September 2021
    - Continuing Accreditation with Conditions, Warning, or Good Cause for two years is granted in March 2020 therefore, the Board of Commissioners will make the next accreditation decision in March 2022

BOC Decision: Continuing Accreditation with Conditions

- When an accredited nursing program is found to be in non-compliance with one (1) or two (2) Standards
- Monitoring time frame determined by the BOC; monitoring not guaranteed, if granted the time frame is outlined in Policy #4 and is based on the length of the nursing program
- Status requirement:
  - Follow-Up Reports (FUR) addressing the Standard(s) with which the nursing program is found to be in non-compliance
  - May include a follow up site visit in conjunction with the Follow-Up Report
BOC Decision: Continuing Accreditation with Conditions

- Nursing program expected to resolve all non-compliance within the conditions monitoring period
- BOC determination at next review = Resolution:
  - Continuing Accreditation with Removal of Conditions
- BOC determination at next review = Non-resolution within maximum monitoring period:
  - Deny Continuing Accreditation
  - Continuing Accreditation for Good Cause if the nursing program meets the 3 principles of good cause

BOC Decision: Continuing Accreditation with Warning

- When an accredited nursing program is found to be in non-compliance with three (3) or more Standards
- Monitoring time frame determined by the BOC; monitoring not guaranteed and if granted will follow timelines outlined in Policy #4
- Status requirement:
  - Follow-Up Report addressing the Standards with which the nursing program is found to be in non-compliance
  - Follow-up site visit required

BOC Decision: Continuing Accreditation with Warning

- Nursing program expected to resolve non-compliance within the warning monitoring period
- BOC determination at next review = Resolution:
  - Continuing Accreditation with Removal of Warning
- BOC determination at next review = Non-resolution within maximum monitoring period:
  - Deny Continuing Accreditation
  - Continuing Accreditation for Good Cause if the nursing program meets the 3 principles of good cause
BOC Decision: Deny Initial Accreditation or Deny Continuing Accreditation

- Occurs when a candidate nursing program seeking initial accreditation is found to be in non-compliance with any Standard
- Can occur for an accredited nursing program on Continuing Accreditation with Conditions or Continuing Accreditation with Warning
- Occurs when an accredited nursing program on Continuing Accreditation for Good Cause is found to be in continued non-compliance with any Standard
- Denial of initial accreditation or denial of continuing accreditation is an appealable decision

BOC Decision: Continuing Accreditation for Good Cause

- Nursing program expected to resolve non-compliance within the good cause monitoring period
- BOC determination at next review = Resolution:
  - Continuing Accreditation
- BOC determination at next review = Non-resolution within maximum monitoring period:
  - Deny Continuing Accreditation

Resources
MS52 interactive bells and whistles
Marsal Stoll, 6/24/2019

KN269 There is no information or script here. I would recommend having all resources/services summarized here. Or perhaps use of the interactive tools with links to the information online. Since we have the content, perhaps we can have Alex/Blu play with it and see about some of their creative ideas.
Keri Nunn-Ellison, 6/19/2019
Additional Resources for Nursing Programs – Being a Peer Evaluator

- Being a peer evaluator is the best way to learn about ACEN accreditation.
- Nursing faculty, nurse administrators, and nurse clinicians are the essential subject matter experts and the driving force in the ACEN peer review process.
- Peer evaluators serve ACEN-accredited nursing programs in every stage of the peer review process and are committed to strengthening the quality of nursing education through accreditation.
- Peer evaluators are asked to do one site visit annually and all expenses are paid for by the nursing program being visited.

Services

- Advisory Review
- Observer on Site Visit Team
- ACEN Self-Study Forum
- ACEN Program Administrator Workshop
- ACEN Annual Accreditation Conference
- Webinars

ACEN professional staff

- The ACEN employs nurses who are experienced nurse educators and nurse clinicians.
- Colleagues who have “walked in your shoes”.
- Link to ACEN staff: https://www.acenursing.org/staff/
- ACEN Office: 1+ 404-975-5000