

# Agenda Item # 11.D.



STATE AND CONSUMER SERVICES AGENCY • ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, GOVERNOR  
**BOARD OF VOCATIONAL NURSING & PSYCHIATRIC TECHNICIANS**  
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**DATE:** May 8, 2009

**TO:** Board Members

**FROM:** Anne Powers, Ph.D., R.N.  
Nursing Education Consultant

**SUBJECT:** North-West College, West Covina, Vocational Nursing Program – Consideration of Placement on Provisional Accreditation (Director: Adnan AlMouazzan– West Covina, Los Angeles County, Private)

North-West College, West Covina, Vocational Nursing Program is presented to the Board for consideration of placement on provisional accreditation. In accordance with Section 2526.1 (c) of the Vocational Nursing Rules and Regulations,

“The Board may place any program on provisional accreditation when a program does not meet all requirements as set forth in this chapter and in Section 2526....“

Section 2530 (l) of the Vocational Nursing Rules and Regulations states:

“The program shall maintain a yearly average minimum pass rate on the licensure examination that does not fall below 10 percentage points of the state average pass rate for first time candidates of accredited vocational nursing schools for the same period.  
 (1) Failure to maintain the required yearly average minimum pass rate for two years or eight consecutive quarters may be cause to place a program on provisional accreditation.

The North-West College, West Covina, Vocational Nursing Program, annual average licensure examination pass rates for the past eight quarters are:

NCLEX-PN® LICENSURE EXAMINATION PASS RATES			
Quarter	State Annual Average Pass Rate	Program Annual Average Pass Rate	Variance from State Annual Average Pass Rate
Apr-Jun 2007	77%	32%	-45
Jul-Sep 2007	76%	39%	-37
Oct-Dec 2007	76%	38%	-38
Jan-Mar 2008	75%	38%	-37
Apr-Jun 2008	74%	53%	-21
July-Sep 2008	74%	51%	-23
Oct-Dec 2008	73%	51%	-22
Jan-Mar 2009	73%	43%	-30

## **History of Prior Board Actions**

- On September 16, 2005, the Executive Officer approved North-West College, West Covina, to begin a vocational nursing program with an initial class of 45 students on September 26, 2005, only, and approved the program curriculum for 1,624 hours, including 664 theory and 960 clinical hours.
- On October 1, 2005, the director notified Board staff of a delay start from September 26, 2005, to October 3, 2005, with a completion date of November 27, 2006.
- On August 9, 2006, the Executive Officer approved initial full accreditation for North-West College, West Covina, Vocational Nursing Program for the period September 8, 2006, through September 7, 2010, and issued a certificate accordingly.

The Executive Officer also approved the program's request to admit 45 students starting on October 2, 2006, with a projected graduation date of December 18, 2007.

Furthermore, the Executive Officer approved the program's request to admit 45 students into a second full-time class starting on February 12, 2007, with a projected graduation date of May 10, 2008.

- On January 28, 2008, Board staff notified North-West College, West Covina, Vocational Nursing Program that the program's pass rates had fallen below 10 percentage points of the state average pass rates for the past four quarters.

On February 21, 2008, the director submitted a plan to improve pass rates. The plan included the following:

- 1) The program's schedule of classes were rearranged to reflect the program's actual curriculum hours.
  - 2) The instructional plan was reviewed by the faculty.
  - 3) The student handbook was revised and distributed to students and faculty.
  - 4) The Education Resource Inc., (ERI) was implemented and strictly enforced, requiring all students to pass a Licensed Practical Nurse Assessment at the end.
  - 5) An NCLEX-PN review course is now mandatory before graduation for each class.
  - 6) If a student failed the remediation process they were terminated from the program.
  - 7) The students are encouraged to take the NCLEX-PN within three months of graduation and the mechanism to practice the ERI can be accessed from the students' personal computers.
- On April 22, 2008, Board staff notified North-West College, West Covina, Vocational Nursing Program that the program's pass rates had fallen below 10 percentage points of the state average pass rates for the past five quarters.

- On May 14, 2008, North-West College, West Covina, Vocational Nursing Program's request was approved to admit 45 students to a class commencing May 26, 2008, with an anticipated graduation date of July 26, 2009.

The Executive Officer approved ongoing admissions of two classes every 10 months, to replace graduating classes, only, for North-West College, West Covina, Vocational Nursing Program with the following stipulations:

- a. No additional classes are added to the program's current pattern of admissions without prior Board approval. The program's current pattern of admissions includes two full-time classes with admission of 45 students every 10 months.
  - b. The director documents that adequate resources, i.e. faculty and facilities are available to support each admitted class of students.
- On August 28, 2008, Board staff notified North-West College, West Covina, Vocational Nursing Program that the program's pass rates had fallen below 10 percentage points of the state average pass rates for the past six quarters. The consultant requested documentation that the elements of the program's plan of correction were being carried out.

The director submitted a progress report, detailing strict adherence to the Board-approved program hours; instruction and supervision of faculty with regard to the program instructional plan; revision of and strict adherence to administrative policies regarding admission, screening and selection of students, and remediation; implementation of the ERI/ATI testing system; and implementation of a mandatory NCLEX-PN® review course prior to graduation.

- On November 13, 2008, Board staff notified North-West College, West Covina, Vocational Nursing Program that the program's pass rates had fallen below 10 percentage points of the state average pass rates for the past seven quarters. The consultant requested current enrollment information; current faculty and facility information; documentation of clinical rotation schedules; an analysis of the program's correctional plan indicating the elements that have been effective and those that have not; and alterations that will be made in the correctional plan based upon the analysis.
- On December 8, 2008, North-West College, West Covina, Vocational Nursing Program's request to admit 30 students to a class commencing January 19, 2009, with an anticipated graduation date of March 23, 2010, was denied. The program's request for a change in its ongoing admissions pattern was denied. The ongoing admissions pattern of two classes every 10 months, to replace graduating classes, only, remains in effect for North-West College, West Covina, Vocational Nursing Program with the following stipulations:

- a. No additional classes are added to the program's current pattern of admissions without prior Board approval. The program's current pattern of admissions includes two full-time classes with admission of 45 students every 10 months.
  - b. The director documents that adequate resources, i.e. faculty and facilities are available to support each admitted class of students.
- On December 10, 2008, the director submitted a response to Board staff's notification that the program's pass rates had fallen below 10 percentage points of the state average pass rates for the past seven quarters. The director stated that there was inadequate communication from the former director when he transitioned into the director role. The director implemented an 80% pass rate requirement; eliminated the "re-take" policy for failed exams; pursued a contract with NLN to purchase their resource system; took over the responsibility for development of comprehensive exams; changed the admissions policy; and provided students with a financial incentive for taking the NCLEX-PN® exam within three months following graduation.
  - On January 6, 2009, the director met with the Executive Officer, the supervising nursing education consultant and the program's nursing education consultant to discuss the new changes implemented in the program's administration at North-West College, West Covina, Vocational Nursing Program. The program has initiated changes in the grading policy and in the exit examination testing process since appointment of a new director in July 2007. The director requested re-consideration of the Executive Officer's decision on December 8, 2008, to deny an increase in frequency of admissions and an increase in pattern ongoing admissions.

The director has implemented changes that are expected to yield an increase in pass rates in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarters of 2009. Additionally, the program desired to preserve the newly-acquired clinical facility availability without a break in the student clinical experience rotation. In addition, the program has now replaced the previously used ERI exit examination with the National League for Nursing (NLN) exit examination to assist in improving the program's pass rates.

After a review of all the circumstances, the Executive Officer approved the program's request to admit 30 students to a class commencing January 19, 2009, only, with an anticipated graduation date of March 23, 2010, but upheld the December 8, 2008, denial of an increase in the ongoing admissions pattern.

## **Enrollment**

The 60-week full-time program is currently approved for ongoing admissions of 45 students per class, once every 10 months.

The following table represents **projected** student enrollment based on current and proposed class starts and completions. The table indicates **a maximum enrollment of 58 students** for the period from June 2008 to January 2009.

ENROLLMENT DATA				
CLASS DATES		#Students Admitted	#Students Current or Completed	Total Enrolled
Start	Complete			
6/08		45	33	33
1/09		30	25	33 + 25 = 58

### Licensing Examination Statistics

The following statistics, furnished by the Pearson Vue and published by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing as "Jurisdictional Summary of All First-Time Candidates Educated in Member Bureau Jurisdiction," for the period April 2007 to March 2009, specify the pass percentage rates for graduates of North-West College, West Covina, Vocational Nursing Program, on the National Council Licensure Examination for Practical (Vocational) Nurses (NCLEX-PN®).

NCLEX-PN® Licensure Examination Data						
Quarterly Statistics					Annual Statistics*	
Quarter	# Candidates	# Passed	% Passed	State Quarterly Pass Rate	Program Average Annual Pass Rate	State Average Annual Pass Rate
Apr-Jun 2007	12	0	0%	74%	32%	77%
Jul-Sep 2007	5	4	80%	76%	39%	76%
Oct-Dec 2007	1	0	0%	76%	38%	76%
Jan-Mar 2008	6	5	83%	75%	38%	75%
Apr-June 2008	20	8	40%	70%	53%	74%
July-Sep 2008	34	18	53%	74%	51%	74%
Oct-Dec 2008	14	7	50%	73%	51%	73%
Jan-Mar 2009	2	1	50%	70%	43%	72%

\*The Annual Pass Rate changes every quarter. It is calculated by dividing the number of candidates who passed during the current and previous three-quarters by the number of candidates who tested during the same period.

Based on the most recent data available (January to March 2009), the program's average annual pass rate is 43%. The California average annual pass rate for graduates from accredited vocational nursing programs who took the NCLEX-PN® for the first time during the same period is 72%. The average annual pass rate for North-West College, West Covina, Vocational Nursing Program, is 29 percentage points below the state average annual pass rate.

## **Faculty and Facilities**

Section 2534(d) of the Vocational Nursing Rules and Regulations states:

“For supervision of clinical experience, there shall be a maximum of 15 students for each instructor.”

The total number of Board-approved faculty is 28. Twenty-seven instructors are available to teach in the clinical area. For a maximum enrollment of 57 students, four instructors are needed. Therefore, the number of faculty is adequate for the current enrollment.

Section 2534(b) of the Vocational Nursing Rules and Regulations states, in part:

“Schools shall have clinical facilities adequate as to number, type, and variety of patients treated, to provide clinical experience for all students in the areas specified by Section 2533. There must be available for student assignment, an adequate daily census of patients to afford a variety of clinical experiences consistent with competency-based objectives and theory being taught.”

The program has sufficient clinical facilities to afford the number, type and variety of patients that will provide clinical experience consistent with competency-based objectives and theory being taught. This information has been verified by the consultant.

## **Other Considerations**

During a January 6, 2009 meeting with the Executive Officer and Nursing Education Consultant, the program director stated that the program is committed to the students and to improvement of the licensure examination pass rates. The director explained that he has implemented changes that are expected to yield an increase in pass rates in the second and third quarters of 2009. In addition, the program replaced the previously used ERI exit examination with the National League for Nursing (NLN) exit examination to assist in improving the program’s licensure examination pass rates.

## **Recommendations:**

1. The Board place North-West College, West Covina, Vocational Nursing Program on provisional accreditation for the period from May 22, 2009, through May 21, 2011, and issue a notice to the program to identify specific areas of noncompliance and requirements for correction as referenced in section 2526.1(e) of the Vocational Nursing Rules and Regulations (see Attachment A).
2. Require the program to submit a follow-up report by May 21, 2010. The report must include a comprehensive analysis of the program, specific actions to improve the

program pass rates, timeline for implementation, and expected outcomes. The following elements must be addressed in the program's analysis.

- a. Admission Criteria.
- b. Screening and Selection Criteria.
- c. Terminal Objectives.
- d. Curriculum Objectives.
- e. Instructional Plan.
- f. Theory and Clinical Objectives for Each Course.
- g. Lesson Plans for Each Course.
- h. List of Textbooks.
- i. Attendance Policy.
- j. Remediation Policy.
- k. Evaluations of Theory and Clinical Faculty.
- l. Evaluations of Theory Presentations.
- m. Evaluations of Clinical Rotations and Their Correlation to Theory Presentations.

**Rationale:** North-West College, West Covina, Vocational Nursing Program, is not in compliance with Section 2530(l) of the Vocational Nursing Rules and Regulations. The two-year provisional accreditation period will permit the program to focus its resources on improvement of licensure examination pass rates.

Attachment A – Notice of Change in Accreditation Status