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**Report Identifies Faculty Shortages As Key Barrier for Clinical Placement of Students**

Wallingford, CT, October 24, 2007 -- In spite of 11,871 clinical placement opportunities for registered nursing students in 32 hospitals across Connecticut, additional capacity is needed for training nurses in pediatric, perioperative, maternity, and behavioral health care, according to an [assessment](#) conducted by the Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) for the Connecticut Office of Workforce Competitiveness and the Connecticut Allied Health Workforce Policy Board.

“The process of planning and procuring clinical placements for healthcare students, particularly for those pursuing nursing education, has been an area of concern for healthcare organizations and schools in Connecticut,” said Mary Ann Hanley, of the Connecticut Office for Workforce Competitiveness. “Anecdotally, lack of available clinical placements had been identified as a barrier to preparing the healthcare workforce in Connecticut. We commissioned this assessment to determine the extent of this issue and its underlying causes.”

Lack of faculty was one of the most frequently cited barriers to clinical placement by study participants. In addition to the need for additional RN clinical placement opportunities, the CHA assessment showed that there appears to be some gaps in opportunities for licensed practical nurses and those enrolled in radiology/diagnostic imaging professions. The current capacity for clinical placement of students is sufficient for students enrolled in surgical technology programs, rehabilitation services (physical, occupational, and speech therapy), unlicensed assistive personnel, and certified nursing assistant students.

CHA gathered the information for this assessment from surveys of hospitals, long-term care facilities, and primary care centers and a series of focus groups—the development of the report and its recommendations was guided by an Advisory Board composed of representatives from healthcare facilities and schools that educate members of the healthcare workforce.

“The growing shortage of healthcare workers is having an impact on all facets of workforce development including the placement of students for clinical training,” said Elizabeth Beaudin, PhD, CHA’s Director of Nursing and Workforce Initiatives. “There is a lack of faculty and staff, not enough preceptors, and, often, simply not enough space in healthcare facilities, to accommodate students-in-training.”

Key recommendations for ensuring enough capacity for students’ clinical training include:

- Establishing initiatives aimed at bolstering nursing faculty resources, such as promoting the development of joint appointments so that qualified nurses can practice at hospitals/agencies and also serve as faculty for schools of nursing;
- Strengthening preceptorship in nursing through programs to educate new staff RN preceptors;
- Encouraging schools and hospital/agency partnerships to further explore scheduling alternatives regarding shifts, days of the week, and semester;
- Sharing best practices through a focused-Policy Board initiative;
- Developing a mechanism or list of opportunities available for students;
- Exploring the development of a simulation center to supplement laboratory resources and enhance student training.

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**The Connecticut Hospital Association** has been dedicated to serving Connecticut’s hospitals since 1919. Through state and federal advocacy, CHA represents the interests of Connecticut’s not-for-profit hospitals on key healthcare issues in the areas of quality and patient safety, access and coverage, workforce, public health, and hospital reimbursement.

**The Connecticut Allied Health Workforce Policy Board**, which began meeting in March 2005, was established in Public Act 04-220 (*An Act Concerning Allied Health Workforce Needs*) to conduct research and planning activities related to the allied healthcare workforce.

**The Office of Workforce Competitiveness** (OWC) was created by Executive Order No. 14 & PA00-192 CGS 4-124W No. 14 to focus on the changes needed to prepare Connecticut's workforce for the rapidly changing and competitive economy of the 21st Century.