



## **Practice/Academic Partnerships to Assist the Nursing Workforce During the COVID-19 Declared Emergency Communication March 31, 2020**

“A Policy Brief: U.S. Nursing Leadership Supports Practice/Academic Partnerships to Assist the Nursing Workforce during the COVID-19 Crisis” (Policy Brief) has been issued by a collaboration of nursing leaders and is included as part of this communication. The Policy Brief proposes academic-practice partnerships between health care facilities and pre-license RN and PN nursing education programs during the COVID-19 emergency in order to meet academic and workforce needs as follows:

### **Policy Brief Provisions**

The Policy Brief proposes:

1. Nursing students would be employed by the facility on a full or part-time basis and work in the role of a nursing student for compensation and, in conjunction with the student’s nursing education program, would receive academic credit toward meeting clinical requirements.
2. Nursing students would be required to be enrolled in a Board approved pre-license RN or PN education program.

The Policy Brief recommends:

1. Health care facilities and nursing programs are encouraged to promulgate plans to take advantage of this opportunity and make every effort to reach out to eligible nursing students and inform them of the opportunity.
2. Health care facilities and nursing programs are encouraged to collaborate to identify ways to accomplish appropriate facility supervision of the nursing student-employee to achieve the final learning outcomes of the nursing program. For example, the health care facility could hire nursing program faculty to oversee the nursing student-employee, the nursing program faculty could hold joint appointment by the college/university/school and the health care facility, or the health care facility-employed preceptors could oversee the nursing student-employee with nursing program faculty oversight.
3. Nursing program leaders/faculty are encouraged to work with health care facility representatives to align clinical skills and competencies with the nursing student-employee work role/responsibilities.
4. Nursing student-employees must have planned clinical practice experiences that enable the students to attain new knowledge and demonstrate achievement of the final learning outcomes of the nursing programs.
5. Nursing programs should consult with their State Board of Nursing to ensure clinical requirement regulations would be met with this opportunity and experience.
6. Nursing programs are responsible for informing nursing students of the risks and responsibilities associated with working in a health care facility at this time. Additionally, nursing programs are responsible for communicating with students about their rights to be protected from infection and their options for completing the clinical practice requirements of the nursing program.

## **Application of the Nurse Practice Act and Administrative Rules**

While the law and rules specify certain required safeguards for a partnership and to assure safe patient care, the law and rules in Ohio do not prohibit this type of proposed practice/academic partnership and recognize that this practice has occurred in the past.

In addition, Ohio does not require specific minimum hours for clinical experiences, and the Board has issued guidance acknowledging that clinical experiences may need to be altered. See “Additional Guidance to Pre-license Nursing Education Programs” (March 24, 2020).

### Nursing Students Practicing Nursing Care

- Nursing students are authorized to provide nursing care as long as the student is currently enrolled in and actively pursuing completion of an Ohio approved pre-licensure nursing education program, practicing under the auspices of the program, and acting under the supervision of a RN serving for the program as a faculty member or teaching assistant. Section 4723.32(A), ORC.
- If the requirements of Section 4723.32(A) are not met, the nursing student would be working as an unlicensed person and would be limited to performing only nursing tasks that are delegated by a licensed nurse. (See Chapter 4723-13, OAC).

### Nursing Education Programs

- The nursing program must have a current executed written agreement with the clinical site, where the nursing student is employed as part of their clinical experience. Rule 4723-5-17, OAC.
- For clinical experience, the nursing student must be engaged in clinical practices established by the faculty responsible for teaching the course to meet clinical course objectives. Rule 4723-5-01(F), OAC; Rule 4723-5-13, OAC, for RN programs and 4723-5-14, OAC, for PN programs.
- The student’s nursing practice must be supervised by a faculty member, teaching assistant or preceptor. See Rule 4723-5-10, OAC (RN programs) and Rule 4723-5-11, OAC (PN Programs); and Rule 4723-5-20, OAC.