

## Cloud Nursing Program History

The nursing program co-sponsored by Cloud County Community College and North Central Kansas Technical College has a dramatically progressive history.

In August of 1969, twenty-nine students and three instructors began working and studying in some renovated rooms in the Masonic Building in Concordia, Kansas. This was the first Practical Nursing class sponsored by the Area Vocational Technical School. The clinical experiences were held at St. Joseph's Hospital and the Cloud County Health Department. In August of 1970, the first class of twenty-seven students graduated on a Friday. The following Monday the second class of thirty-three students started the program.

The second and third classes in the program continued to have classes and clinical experiences similar to the first class.

Upon graduation of the third class in 1972, the program was moved to temporary facilities in the basement of Mitchell County Hospital in Beloit. The first major curriculum changes were made for this class by shortening the program to forty-two weeks and incorporating a clinical experience with geriatric patients. Because Mitchell County Hospital and St. Joseph's Hospital were both used for clinical experience, students were rotated between the two hospitals. Those with clinical experience at St. Joseph's were transported by school bus. In August of 1973, the class number was increased to forty-four students after adequate resources were identified. A fourth instructor was then added to the staff.

In the spring of 1974, representatives from the health service agencies in the Hays area approached the Area Vocational-Technical School with a request to provide a Practical Nurse program to help meet their local nurse-power needs. A proposal was submitted to the Department of Education for funding of a PN level in Hays, Kansas, and monies were approved late in July. In the next few weeks, instructors were hired and applicants were recruited, screened, and selected. A classroom was located in the basement of St. Anthony Hospital. Clinical facilities were arranged with St. Anthony Hospital and Hadley Regional Medical Center at Hays and St. John's Nursing Center in Victoria. The satellite program was launched. The class moved into a new self-contained facility on the St. Anthony Hospital grounds in the fall of 1977.

Plans were initiated in January of 1975 to develop an Associate Degree Nursing Program at Cloud County Community College. After study of the program purposes and available resources, the administrative officers of the Community College and the Vocational Technical School agreed to co-sponsor a career ladder program in nursing for Practical Nurses and Associate Degree Nurses. The nursing department chairman of the Vocational Technical School nursing faculty was appointed as the nursing program coordinator and faculty members from other departments within the college planned a career ladder program which was approved by the Kansas State Board of Nursing in March 1976. The first students to be admitted into the co-sponsored program began study in August 1977. Once again the program was confronted with changes and new challenges. Students were studying nursing as well as general education courses with other college students. The faculty felt the impact of teaching in a new and unproven level.

In August of 1976, the total co-sponsored program was in operation with three instructors at the Hays satellite campus, four instructors at the Beloit campus and four at the Cloud County Community College campus. A total of seventy-one students were enrolled in the nursing program at the Practical Nurse level and twenty-eight at the Associate Degree level. The clinical experiences were held in five general hospitals, three nursing homes, physician offices, a youth center and two day care facilities. In the spring of 1977, ninety-six of the ninety-nine students who started the program in August were graduated.

Beginning with the inception of the program, the underlying philosophy has been to offer a program of study based on excellence. To this end the faculty and administration have systematically reviewed and revised the program to keep it creative, current and vital. The reviews and revisions have taken into consideration available resources, student achievement, employer satisfaction, state and national trends in nursing and criteria for excellence as established by the National League for Nursing.

The faculty conducted an intensive self-study of the Practical Nurse program in 1974 - 75 and in the spring of 1976 received initial accreditation of the program by the National League for Nursing for eight years. During the 1982-83 school years the practical nurse level was the focus of a self-study and in June 1983 was reaccredited for a period of eight years.

The Associate Degree level of the program began self-study during the developmental stage. The written document was submitted to the Council of Associate Degree Programs in the fall of 1978. The faculty, administration, graduates and students were disappointed to learn that the Council deferred accreditation and gave the faculty and administration two years to carry out recommendations to correct the deficiencies. During the 1979-80 school year, changes were made to more nearly meet the criteria established by the Council of Associate Degree Programs. A progress report was submitted in the spring of 1980 and initial accreditation was granted in June 1980. In June of 1987 the associate degree level was reaccredited by NLN for eight years.

The school years of 1985-86 and 1986-87 were years of transition for all three campuses. In August 1985, the Hays department moved into the south building on the Vo-Tech Campus. In December 1986, the Concordia department moved to a newly remodeled building in Technical West. During Christmas break the Beloit department moved into the Business Building on the Vo-Tech Campus.

The 1987-88 school year began with full classes at the first level and thirty-three second level students. National attention on the nursing shortage, as well as the entry to practice issue, may have had an influence on enrollment. A major occurrence was the fire on the Hays campus. The building sustained major damage and many of the lab supplies, teaching aides, and library books were lost. Fortunately the building and contents were covered by insurance. The faculty on the Hays campus was resourceful and innovative in maintaining a learning environment.

In 1989 the National League for Nursing visited the practical nursing level of the program. With the rapidly changing trends in health care and education, the faculty was not surprised to have a revisit scheduled in 1996.

With the nineties came an increased awareness of outcome (competency) based education. The curriculum reflected the faculty's commitment to this teaching/learning strategy. Noted also was a movement towards computer competency to enhance student learning and client care. With a continued influx of "non-traditional" students the faculty remained creative in the approach to classroom and clinical learning.

The 1994 graduating class at the Beloit campus was honored as the 25<sup>th</sup> class. In 1994-95 the program was visited by the Kansas State Board of Nursing in the fall and by the AD Council of NLN in the spring. A site visit by the PN Council of NLN took place in the spring of 1996. Each level received continuing accreditation. On July 1, 1996, NCKAVTS formally became North Central Kansas Technical College. In the fall of 1996, NCKTC assumed responsibility for Associate Degree nursing education in Hays.

In the spring of 1999, final approval was granted to separate Hays from the Beloit – Concordia program. Now a two-campus program with eight faculty members, a program coordinator, and a secretary began anew.

For the 2000-01 academic school years the PN level was limited to thirty-two. For 2001-02 admission was limited to twenty-two. Also the program calendar length was shortened from ten and a half months to nine months. In summary the program started in 1969 with three instructors, twenty-nine students and two clinical agencies. Today the program is co-sponsored by two education agencies and utilizes over twenty clinical agencies. A staff of seven faculty members and clinical adjuncts provides nursing instruction for approximately 96 students. There are several coincident factors that made and are making this program work. First (not necessarily in order of importance), a need was recognized. Second, local school administrators were receptive to new ideas and were willing to chart new courses. Third, state-level administrators were open to innovative approaches and willing to work with local officials to make the program meet everyone's standards. Fourth, faculty members were willing to do the necessary work and self-examination to write a new curriculum based on proven models and upgrade their current educational preparation. Fifth, determined, wise leadership of the program coordinator (Mrs. Sue Akers) pulled all the components together. Finally, the reason for which the program exists, the students were eager to learn and readily accept this program's philosophy.

The program continued to work with the advisory committee to create an even stronger bond between education and service. The competencies of the course were reviewed for relevance and the profile revised. Faculty remains committed to finding clinical learning situations that address the program outcomes. A watchful eye remained on the nursing shortage and our ability to address it.

The PN level sacrificed NLNAC\* Accreditation. The associate degree level had a positive site visit in the spring of 2003 and received continuing accreditation for eight years.

During the 2006 academic year plans to admit students twice a year at the PN level were formulated. The Kansas State Board of Regents with the support of the Kansas State Board of Nursing had issued a directive for program size to increase. With a sense of adventure similar to those who founded the program, the nursing faculty accepted the new challenge with a positive

attitude and flexibility. The students responded. With the critical shortage of nursing faculty, many adjunct faculty members were assigned for specialized content areas and clinical experiences. In the Fall of 2008 a core curriculum developed by the practical nursing programs of Kansas with direction from the Kansas Board of Regents and the Kansas State Board of Nursing was implemented. Spring of 2009 brought the end of the combined program. North Central Kansas Technical College indicated their intent to continue a PN program but felt the need for a full time Nursing Administrator. Cloud County Community College continued to provide education leading from LPN to ADN. Although the official ties were broken, proximity and need will direct a cooperative relationship in the future

In the summer of 2009 the nursing skills lab was remodeled to facilitate a strong emphasis on simulation in nursing education. The lab was constructed and furnished largely through a Title III grant. An alumnus of the nursing program also graciously donated funds for a pediatric simulator. A computer lab was also built into existing space, and the classroom was renovated for more effective use of technology.

For the 2011-2012 academic year faculty anticipates adoption of the core curriculum as developed by the State of Kansas and using the Quality and Safety Education for Nurses project (QSEN) competencies as an integral guide.

Since its inception 1,235 students have graduated from the Associate Degree Program. The first graduate of the program was present to pin the 1000<sup>th</sup> graduate at the pinning ceremony on May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

In 2011 the program received continuing NLNAC\* accreditation with provisions.

The revised ADN Curriculum Alignment for the state of Kansas was adopted for the 2012-2013 academic year.

\*In May 2013 NLNAC formally changed their name to Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing, Inc. (ACEN)

In 2014 the program received full ACEN accreditation through 2019. A new philosophy was also adopted for the 2014-2015 school year.

In 2016 the program adopted the new ADN Alignment Program Outcomes.

In 2017 the program designed and implemented the Generic Traditional Option for incoming ADN students. This two year option is now available in addition to the Advanced Standing LPN – ADN option offered in previous years.

In 2018 the program had a focused visit from ACEN to review the revised curriculum and new Generic Traditional Program option. This site visit found the program in compliance with all the standards reviewed and identified a strength for Standard 5. In June, the program was approved by KSBN to increase second year enrollment to 40 students. Total program enrollment is now 58 students.

February 2019, the program hosted an ACEN reaccreditation visit and KSBN approval visit. The program received formal notification in October 2019 that The Board of Commissioners granted continuing accreditation to the associate nursing program and scheduled the next evaluation visit for Spring 2027. In June 2019 first year enrollment was increased to 24 students. Total program enrollment 64 students.

January 2020, the Nursing Program entered into the KUCCNP partnership agreement with University of Kansas School of Nursing. This partnership allows students to enroll in both associate level on-site courses at Cloud County Community College nursing program and baccalaureate-level distance-education courses delivered by the KU School of Nursing. Upon completion of the KUCCNP curriculum, the student concurrently earns an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) from the Community College and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) from the KU School of Nursing.

Adopted: 1978  
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