

Strategies to Increase Nursing Student Diversity

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Introduction/Background



To provide socially and culturally competent patient care, it is necessary for nursing programs to produce diversified graduates.

Ethnicity/Sex	Census 2010*	RN National Survey**
White	72.6	83.2
Hispanic	16.3	3.6
African American	12.6	5.4
Asian	4.8	5.5
Female	50.8	93.4
Male	49.2	6.6

* U.S. Census Bureau (2010)

** U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Health Resources and Services Administration (2010)

Purpose/Hypothesis/Aims

- To identify barriers to enrollment for three under-represented groups, i.e. African Americans, Hispanics and males
- To form action plans to recruit well qualified students to increase student diversity in nursing programs

Methods

This qualitative study was done in three phases:

- Literature review
 - Research articles
 - University Webpages
 - Phone calls to nursing colleges
- Interviews with twenty four individuals, six focus groups, and four nursing program recruiters.
- Development of a recruitment plan to help guide nursing colleges in diversifying the student body.

Barriers to Enrollment

Lack of

- Media image:** *"When you look at the brochures and web pictures, there is no black image." "They do not even apply for fear of rejection; they do not see many minority people in the program."*
- Role models:** *"Stigma of nursing is for female." "Those jobs were not available to African Americans."*
- Educational resources:** *"Hispanics think they lack of enough education to become nurses."*
- Money for tuition:** *"I don't have family financial support." "Not enough money."*
- Guidance from parents/teachers:** *"My parents work long hours and they were not home to push us to study." "My counselors did not pay attention to me."*
- Foundation in math and science:** *"Nursing school is not easy. African Americans and Hispanics may find math and science being difficult."*
- Confidence, and perseverance:** *"Curriculum for nursing school is hard." "They fear they may not meet the requirement to apply."*

Action Plans

- Introduce nursing as a profession by utilizing multimedia and internet. Colleges should promote the importance and the reward of nursing by relating case scenarios and retelling positive stories from patients and nurses.
- Market media images and messages using target groups: males, Hispanics and African Americans.



- Encourage and reward nursing students and/or nurses who are Hispanic, African American and/or male meet with and talk to prospective students at various career events:
 - Middle and high schools with higher minority census
 - Junior college career fairs and community job fairs
 - Churches, community centers and organizations with higher target group percentages



Action Plans (continued)

- Provide counseling on financial resources, and most importantly let the prospective students know that they will have financial guidance throughout the entire nursing program to:
 - Create financial plan for each school semester
 - Complete federal and state financial forms
 - Locate private loans
 - Apply for scholarships
- Recognize that it takes a village to make a nurse. Parents, friends, co-workers, teachers, high school counselors, junior college academic advisors, nursing program recruiters and practicing nurses need to help prospective students set up goals for their professional growth, prioritize their life's journey, and persevere in achieving their goal to enroll in a nursing program.



References

- U.S. Census Bureau (2010). *Overview of race and Hispanic origin*. Retrieved from: <http://www.census.gov/>
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Health Resources and Services Administration (2010). *The registered nurse population: 2008 national sample survey of registered nurses*.