Determining the Regional Need for A Masters Nursing Program

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Introduction/Background

A rising infant mortality rate, increasing prevalence of diabetes, and deadly drug crisis are some of the factors contributing to Indiana's overall health ranking of 39th among 50 states (United Health Foundation, 2016). Health disparities are particularly evident in the state's predominantly rural Southwest Central region. With no graduate nursing programs in the 11 county area, educational preparation among local RNs reflects some of the lowest in the state (Table 1.)

| Indiana | | | RN's with at least BS | | Resident/ |
|------------|------------|----------|-----------------------|----------|-----------|
| County | Population | Rurality | degree | APRN FTE | APRN FTE |
| Brown | 15,242 | Urban | 28.6% | 2 | 7621 |
| Crawford | 10,713 | Rural | 23.1% | 1.2 | 8927.5 |
| Daviess | 31,648 | Rural | 30.1% | 11 | 2877. |
| Dubois | 41,889 | Rural | 42.2% | 24.8 | 1689.1 |
| Greene | 33,165 | Rural | 29.5% | 5.6 | 5922.3 |
| Lawrence | 46,134 | Rural | 29.8% | 13.8 | 3343.0 |
| Martin | 10,334 | Rural | 21.4% | 2 | 5167.0 |
| Monroe | 137,974 | Urban | 51.9% | 85.6 | 1611.8 |
| Orange | 19,840 | Rural | 37.5% | 6.42 | 3100 |
| Owen | 21,575 | Urban | 36.4% | 2 | 10787.5 |
| Washington | 28,262 | Urban | 27.6% | 4 | 7065.5 |

Indiana University (2014) strategic plan included initiatives to improve the health of the communities served, including the creation of a regional academic health center with an accompanying need to increase the expertise of nurses in the local workforce.

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to explore the feasibility of offering a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program with a community health specialty track on the Core School of Nursing Bloomington campus. As part of the decision-making process, a needs assessment was completed with the specific aims of determining the:

- 1. extent of prospective student interest in enrolling in a MSN graduate degree program on the regional campus
- 2. which MSN specialty majors should be offered based upon prospective student feedback.

Methods

A team of stakeholders created a 23- item tool to address interest in enrolling in selected MSN tracks if offered on the regional campus(figure). Links to the anonymous Redcap survey were sent to:

- 197 current SON students
- 471 SON alumni
- 52 2016 SON graduates
- 700 RNs at the local partner hospital
- 6 county school nurses

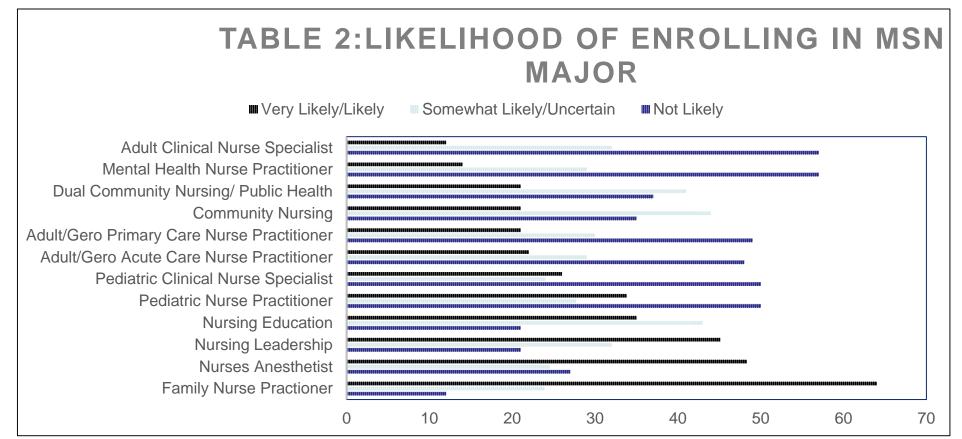
The survey remained open between December 9, 2016 and January 14, 2017.

The Indiana University School of Nursing in Bloomington is seeking your input regarding the need for a Master of Science program on the Bloomington campus. Please complete this brief confidential survey if you are a registered nurse or a student enrolled in a Nursing program and you are interested in obtaining a future graduate degree in Nursing. Thank you for your assistance. 1) Do you plan to enroll in graduate school to further your nursing education | 1 do not plan to enroll in graduate school at some point your nursing education | 1 do not plan to enroll in graduate school | 1 am already enrolled in a graduate program or have a graduate degree in Nursing and the program or have a graduate expression | 1 do not plan to enroll in graduate school | 1 am already enrolled in a graduate program or have a graduate degree on ext. 3-5 years | next. 3-6 years | next.

| 18) | What delivery method are you most interested in for your courses? | Online instruction Hybrid with up to 50% online instruction Face-to-face Do not have a preference |
|-----|--|---|
| 19) | What is your preference for attending classes? | Part-time up to 6 credits per semester Full time at least 9 credits per semester |
| 20) | Where did you receive your baccalaureate degree from? | Graduated from Indiana University Bloomingtor Indiana University other campus Other nursing school Do not yet have my BSN, enrolled at Indiana University Bloomington Do not yet have my BSN, enrolled in another nursing program Do not yet have my BSN, not yet enrolled in another program |
| 21) | How likely you are to stay in Bloomington or the surrounding Southern Indiana area after graduation? | Very likely Likely Somewhat likely Uncertain Unlikely |
| 22) | What is your current zip code? | |
| 23) | Please tell us anything else that you think we should know about your educational preferences. | |

Results

Of the 175 respondents, 116 indicated that they were interested or very interested in enrolling in an MSN program on the regional campus. Table 2 displays interest by MSN major.



Conclusions

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- While the community health option was initially desired by administration as it would meet the perceived health needs of the region, prospective student data did not support it as a viable offering.
- Among the participants likely to remain in Southern Indiana the strongest interest was for majors in:
 - 1. Family nurse practitioner (M=2.69/4)
 - 2. Nursing education (M=2.23/4)
 - 3. Nurse Anesthetist (M=2.07/4)
- 4. Nursing Leadership (M=2.07/4)
- Offering top choices of a family nurse practitioner or nursing education track potentially diverted students from the main SON campus.
- The next step is to design a shared resource model can be created between the Bloomington and Indianapolis campuses to offer the family nurse practitioner and nursing education specialty tracks.

References

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