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MARYLAND BECOMES FIRST STATE IN NATION TO FUND AND REQUIRE ALL NEW REGISTERED NURSES TO COMPLETE RESIDENCY PROGRAM

Maryland reaches goal set by American Academy of Nursing with all 40 acute care hospitals.

Baltimore, MD – Maryland becomes the first state in the nation to achieve the goal set by the American Academy of Nursing calling for all acute care hospitals to require all newly licensed registered nurses (RNs) to complete a nurse residency program, which provides newly licensed nurses with a structured transition into clinical practice. All 40 of Maryland’s acute care hospitals now fund and offer a 12-month residency program.

Growing health care demands and an increasing number of nurses retiring from practice are escalating RN workforce requirements in Maryland and across the country. Strong evidence demonstrates residency programs increase nurses’ retention, confidence, and competence and the likelihood that they will be successful in their positions. In response, national associations, professional organizations, and agencies are calling for residency programs as a condition of employment for newly licensed nurses.

The Maryland Action Coalition formed a workgroup to implement a statewide standardized 12-month residency program, developed by Vizient and the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (Vizient/AACN Nurse Residency Program™), in all acute care hospitals, as hospitals employ the largest number of nurses. Under the auspices of the Maryland Organization of Nurse Leaders Inc. (MONL), hospital nursing leaders joined together to form the Maryland Nurse Residency Collaborative.

Through innovative partnerships and funding mechanisms, such as the Health Services Cost Review Commission, the Collaborative increased the number of acute care hospitals using the Vizient/AACN Nurse Residency Program™ from two in 2011 to all 40 in 2018. All newly licensed nurses entering acute care hospitals are now required to complete the residency program. Jane Kirschling, PhD, RN, FAAN, co-convenor of the Maryland Action Coalition and dean of the University of Maryland School of Nursing, said, “We commend Maryland’s hospital leadership for implementing residency programs for new graduates. These programs serve to bridge the transition from education to practice while strengthening the new graduates’ ability to provide safe, quality care.”

To continue this educational transformation and to ensure high-quality residency programs, Maryland nursing leaders are now aiming to achieve accreditation for the residency programs to validate program excellence and ensure standardization. “While hospitals are an important first step in the journey to broadly implement nurse residencies, having residency programs in *all* settings where nurses work will have the transformative impact needed to meet patient needs now and in the future,” said Sherry B. Perkins, PhD, RN, FAAN, president and CEO, University of Maryland Capital Region Health, and a MONL past president. “Nurses are a vital member of the health care team and make up the largest segment of the health care workforce. Residency programs prepare new nurses to be tomorrow’s leaders, keeping safety and quality at the forefront.”

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MONL is a not-for-profit organization established exclusively for charitable, scientific, and educational purposes. Collaboratively, nurse leaders, executives, educators, administrators, and officers work together to shape the delivery of health care and nursing practices in the state of Maryland and the region. For more information, visit <https://mdonl.nursingnetwork.com>.