

Diversity and Inclusion
Strategic Plan
Maryland Action Coalition

Introduction

Nursing represents the largest sector of the health profession with over three million registered nurses across the nation. What role can and will nursing assume in meeting the increasing demand of an older, more diverse population for health care services?

The demands on our health care system are compounding exponentially. While no one single group will be the majority, in the next 25 years, it is hypothesized that “minority” populations will become the majority in the United States. Considering this demographic shift, there is no doubt that nurses will need to play a key role in delivering better-integrated, patient centered health care.

Diversity and inclusion represent a broad range of personal, social, environmental, organizational and societal cultures. Thus, understanding these cultures, and working through the spectrum of differences to deliver quality healthcare is essential to the profession and the nation.

Maryland Action Coalition

Recognizing that diversity and inclusion in the nursing workforce will continue to play a vital role in improving healthcare access, plus minimizing disparities and improving patient outcomes, the Maryland Action Coalition is developing a strategic plan to address these issues.

An environmental scan and consultation with various stakeholders revealed that while progress has been made in some areas of Maryland, there is still work to be done. Multiple organizations have focused on increasing the diversity of students and employees to reflect current regional demographics. This work has resulted in significant gains in minority representation. These gains must be sustained and new goals need to be set for further increases to meet future demands.

As diversity increases in our educational and healthcare sectors, it is important to recognize the need to purposefully develop an inclusive environment where differing viewpoints, cultural norms, and interpretations are welcomed and considered in shaping the work of organizations.

With these goals in mind, the Maryland Action Coalition has proposed the following strategic plan to guide educational and workplace initiatives. Schools, organizations and worksites can adopt all or some of the goals. The annual 2018 summit meeting of the MDAC will provide a venue for the reporting of progress on the goals and initiatives.

The MDAC will establish a Diversity and Inclusion Committee that will provide oversight and facilitate the following strategic initiatives. This committee will report on progress at the annual MDAC summit in order to disseminate work in progress and outcomes.

Mission: The Maryland Action Coalition (MDAC) is committed to diverse and inclusive excellence with the goal of weaving inclusivity throughout educational and practice settings.

Strategic Goal 1: Diversity and Inclusion will be a priority in education, practice and leadership settings

Initiative 1.1: Each school of nursing will develop a sustainability plan for student enrollments and faculty/staff diversity by 2020

Initiative 1.2: Each school of nursing will designate a responsible officer to oversee the sustainability plan in order to continue to diversify the nursing workforce

Initiative 1.3: Healthcare agencies will purposefully target recruitment activities to reflect community demographics

Initiative 1.4: Health care employers will review patient satisfaction surveys to determine if there is any evidence of implicit bias toward healthcare providers who identify with a minority group

Strategic Goal 2: Organizational intentionality on training will hold employees accountable for demonstrating learning and changes in behavior

Initiative 2.1: Each school will disseminate information on cultural competence literacy trainings that focus on unconscious and implicit bias

Strategic Goal 3: Develop support programs for under-represented faculty, students and staff with a focus on thriving

Initiative 3.1: Each school of nursing will have tutorial/remedial and academic success teams trained to assist students from a variety of cultural backgrounds, abilities and support systems

Initiative 3.2: Health care employers will provide mentoring and orientations to assist employees in learning the unspoken expectations inherent in work settings

Initiative 3.3: Each school will raise awareness of the availability of national minority nursing organizations in support of professional growth

Initiative 3.4: Encourage the inclusion of content on unconscious and implicit bias in nursing residency curricula

Initiative 3.5: Advocate for resources to support student success on the NCLEX

Strategic Goal 4: Encourage associations and affinity groups to work with each other to further the goals of diversity and inclusion to include:

Initiative 4.1: Associations/affinity groups developing an intentional plan for accessing knowledge, networking, power sources and developing leadership acumen

Initiative 4.2: Disseminating information on healthcare pipeline programs within Maryland

Strategic Goal 5: Develop a uniformed method for benchmarking and tracking data.

Initiative 5.1: Each school of nursing will consider holistic admission processes

Initiative 5.2: Solicit annual demographic and workforce data from the Maryland Board of Nursing