SoN Pioneers Nurse Residency

Ask any experienced nurse what single change would have made the start of a professional nursing career easier, and the answer would most likely be, “A mentor.” A federal grant awarded to SoN and five partner health care facilities addresses that wish.

New graduates going to work in one of the five Minnesota settings will serve a residency in which they will be individually mentored by senior nurses on matters ranging from their professional roles to providing care to culturally diverse patients.

“The leap from the classroom to the workplace is huge—a culture shock,” says Ann Jones, Director of Undergraduate Studies at the University of Minnesota School of Nursing. “This program will help nurses make that transition.”

The $226,000 grant, from the Health Resources and Services Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, was awarded to SoN and its partners: Mercy Hospital, Moose Lake; Dakota County Public Health; Fairview University Medical Center, Minneapolis; Methodist Hospital, St. Louis Park; North Memorial Hospital, Golden Valley. The grant is funded through the Nursing Reimbursement Act.

By helping new nurses be successful in the first months of their professional lives, the project should improve nurse retention, Jones says. It will also help the five health care partners recruit diverse nurse applicants by offering a more attractive workplace. one of the causes of the state’s nursing shortage: difficulties encountered by newly minted nurses as they move from classroom to work.

Strengthening support systems for newly hired nurses is a strategy proposed by many national groups. This program, which creates a partnership between Minnesota education and health care practice, is one of the first of its kind.

Because it offers individualized mentoring and the five workplaces are so varied, the program will help nurses of diverse backgrounds deliver culturally competent care to an increasingly diverse patient population. The sites include a rural 31-bed hospital, a public health department, an urban academic health care center, an independent hospital, and a hospital within an integrated care system. 

Post-baccalaureate class