

NORQUEST COLLEGE

**PRACTICAL NURSE DIPLOMA FOR
INTERNATIONALLY EDUCATED NURSES**

PUBLIC REPORT

**ALBERTA EMPLOYMENT & IMMIGRATION
and
CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION CANADA**

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The Practical Nurse Diploma for Internationally Educated Nurses (PNDIEN) is a 19 month Nursing diploma for internationally educated nurses. It is an interdisciplinary program designed to address identified linguistic, cultural, critical thinking skills, academic, and nursing competency gaps affecting the Clinical success of internationally-educated nurses. The Faculty of Foundational and Intercultural Studies and the Faculty of Health Sciences collaborated on this project.

It started off as a bridging program in response to labour needs and a federal and provincial government Enhanced Language Training (ELT) call in 2006 for sustainable solutions to projected labour shortages. Two categories of students benefited from the bridging program – Canadian Culture and language for practical nurses (CCLPN); they were (1) internationally educated nurses (IEN), and medical doctors or internationally educated nurses with ESL needs.

Since 2006 the program growth has been informed by development and delivery focussed goals. For development, the goal was to refine intake processes, develop new assessment tools, research exit testing, and modify the structure of the program to align with the new curriculum mandated by the College of Licensed Practical Nurses (CLPNA) and increase professional development capacity in interviewing and screening appropriate candidates. The new curriculum mandate from CLPNA requires the practical nurse diploma program to offer 22 courses over 68 weeks. The delivery aspect focussed on offering a fifteen to nineteen month face-to-face program that will provide the expertise and support to increase language proficiency, academic preparedness, nursing competencies and intercultural communication skills in all participants and build a successful bridge from education to employment.

The key outputs of this venture have been (1) a customized ESL for nursing curriculum which has since been shared with Halifax Immigration Learning Services and Bow Valley College, Calgary and (2) the graduation of over 60 qualified and capable practical nurses. (3) The learnings of the initial phase of the pilot which have also been shared at an ATESL conference, through a presentation to Memorial University in Newfoundland, and through a presentation to Canadian Association of Practical Nurse Educators, in Newfoundland in October 2007(4) an interactive asynchronous online writing workshop (5) a formalized and extended intercultural communication module with case study resources (6) development of asynchronous interactive

Blackboard resources for three challenge nursing courses and one non-challenge nursing course. Outcomes of the project have been the impressive language gains by the participants, completion of required nursing courses and Clinicals, acquisition of an institutional version of CELBAN, and recognition by AET's internationalizing the Teaching and Learning Award.

In fact, since 2006, the PNDIEN program has graduated 4 classes of IENs and will be graduating the 5th cohort in November of 2011. Graduates from the program have the following transfer options: Post –basic operating room program for LPNS – Mac Ewan University; Post- LPN Bachelor of Nursing program – Athabasca University; Bachelor of Applied Human Service Administration program – Mac Ewan University; Bachelor of Technology in Technology Management – NAIT.