What are collaborative baccalaureate nursing programs?1

- cooperative nursing education between colleges, universities and practice setting partners
- an egalitarian partnership in the design and delivery of curriculum
- meets the Council of University Programs in Nursing (COUPN) approval requirements for a nursing degree as well as College of Nurses of Ontario expectations
- offered at both college and university sites by qualified college and university faculty
- maximizes all the resources from participating partners
- can be fully articulated or integrated (Skolnik, 1996):
  - in articulated programs, the first part of the program (usually the first two years) is delivered by the college and the second two years by the university
  - integrated programs are seamless in nature with both college and university partners involved in each year of the program

Why are collaborative programs necessary?

- Provide opportunity to maximize and utilize the best aspects of both programs
- Enhance access to degree programs through broad geographical locations (e.g. 22 colleges and 10 universities)
- It is not justifiable to close college programs and expand university nursing programs in the current political and economic climate (Skolnik, 1996)
- Can be an effective nursing recruitment strategy, given that degree programs appear to be more attractive to prospective nursing students than diploma programs (O’Brien-Pallas, Baumann, & Lochhaas-Gerlach, 1998)

Who supports the development of collaborative programs?

1. The Ministry of Education and Training (MET)
   - Since 1990, discussion papers from MET have identified the need for colleges and universities to work more collaboratively to enhance credit transferability, mobility, and access2
     - In response to demand for improved relationships between colleges and universities, the MET established the College University Consortium Council (CUCC) in 1996. The Council has funded 15 collaborative projects, 4 of which were nursing (CUCC, 1998).

Who supports the development of collaborative programs?

2. Key Stakeholder Groups:
   - Committees with key stakeholder memberships have recommended the establishment of collaborative baccalaureate programs as the major strategy in accomplishing nursing education reform.3

What do we know about collaborative nursing programs in Canada?
By 1994 there were 20 collaborative baccalaureate partnerships in Canada involving university, college, and hospital Schools of Nursing (Canadian Nurses Association, 1994).

Alberta and British Columbia have the most experience with collaborative programs.

The Board of Accreditation of CAUSN has reviewed the policies and procedures of accreditation to accommodate inclusion of collaborative programs.

Multiple models of collaborative program design are in existence (JNAP, 1994).

What is happening in Ontario?

- most of the progress with collaborative partnerships was achieved in the early 1990's
- 6 partnerships are no longer functioning, while three remain
- 1 articulated program admitted its first students in fall, 1997 (Georgian, Seneca, and York)
- 2 programs are in the early phases of planning (articulated at St. Lawrence, Loyalist and Queens, integrated at Centennial, George Brown, Humber and Ryerson)

What are the barriers/impeding factors?

- The main barrier is the absence of a governmental “policy framework that supports collaborative programming and provides financial incentives for institutions in both sectors to invest resources needed to develop and implement programs” (p. 4, CUCC, 1998).
- Different funding models for colleges and universities (including fee structures) makes harmonization of financial resources difficult.
- The perceived and actual mandates of both institutions result in different value systems for the foundation of curriculum.
- Some partnerships have not been able to agree on the minimum academic level needed pre-admission to support success in baccalaureate level work.
- Inter- and intra-institutional barriers are often related to preservation of institutional autonomy.
- Universities are being challenged to enhance flexibility and access to degree education for diploma prepared registered nurses as well as expand graduate programs which require much energy and resource consumption. In the absence of a regulatory requirement or mandate from the government, collaborative program development may not be a priority for some institutions (JPNC, 1996).

What are the current facilitators?

- The Ontario Minister of Health supports the development of collaborative programs as the key strategy in entry to practice at the baccalaureate level (Witmer, 1998).
- The College of Nurses declared that the educational requirement for new RNs will be the nursing degree by 2005. They also recommend that collaborative programs be a key way to achieve this objective (Risk & Cook, 1998).
- The CUCC is designing protocols and funding options for collaborative programs (CUCC, 1998).
- MET has recognized that they need to play a role in facilitating collaborative programming (Trick,1996).

References

Collaborative Baccalaureate Nursing Programs in Ontario – A Key Strategy in Achieving Entry to Practice

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