

## Strengthening the Pathway into Nursing Careers by Providing Living, Sustainable Wages in Hawai'i through Nurse Residency Programs and Specialty Training and Decreasing/Preventing Increases in WIOA Adult Rolls

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### Background:

Nursing is the largest cohort of licensed individuals and the largest group of healthcare workers in the state. In the current COVID-19 environment, nurses are in high demand, with the Healthcare Association of Hawai'i Healthcare Workforce Initiative (HAH HWI) and the Hawai'i State Center for Nursing estimating a gap of over 100 nursing positions today and upward of 650 nurses needed should the state enter into an extreme healthcare utilization surge. In fact, Hawai'i has recently appealed to the federal government for assistance and additional nursing resources as Hawai'i hospitals have reached staffing capacity. These needs are estimated for acute care hospitals only, and the need is even larger when nursing homes and other care settings are accounted for.

Additionally, prior to COVID-19, the healthcare industry through the HAH HWI identified needs for specialty nurses which importantly provided more detail on the numbers and specific types of nurses in demand, beyond simply "RN" as indicated in national and state labor market data. Further exploration of nursing needs through conversations with industry also revealed that "new grad" nurses have difficulties transitioning to the workforce, which is why facilities are hesitant to hire, thus contributing to Hawai'i's "brain drain" as new grad nurses move to the mainland to gain the experience needed to obtain a nursing job in Hawai'i. However many never return because of starting families and finding the mainland more economically hospitable.

### The Need:

Hawai'i needs to train (1) new grad nurses to facilitate their entry into the workforce, (2) specialty nurses, and (3) nurse preceptors.

Though hospitals have received some fiscal relief through the federal CARES Act and other federal appropriations, the cost of delivering healthcare has grown at an unprecedented rate and the need to train the nursing workforce and their team-members both resulted in a diversion of employer-based workforce training funds to address these needs. *As such, the funds normally allocated to new graduate nurse transition to practice has been reallocated for COVID response, in this time of need.* Though employers still prioritize the value, benefit and need of nurse residency programs, the fiscal ability has been compromised in the current fiscal year due to COVID.

The Hawai'i State Center for Nursing convenes the Hawai'i Nurse Residency Program Collaborative (HNRPC), which comprises eight acute care hospitals on Hawai'i County,

Honolulu City and County and Maui County. This collaborative, the first of its kind in the nation, has provided residency programs to more than 900 new graduate nurses since 2012. Further, it supports employers and achieves a 4% first-year retention rate, exceeding the national first year retention rate of 82.5% by greater than 12 percentage points. However, despite the successful retention rates achieved through this collaborative, hospital employers identify that transition to practice for new graduate nurses remains a continuing organizational, and statewide challenge (HAH, 2019).

### Proposed Solution:

This proposal is to fund the HNRPC transition to a new curriculum and platform. In doing so, the state will achieve the following:

- Improved access to nurse residency programs for neighbor island residents, including those on Kaua'i and North Hawai'i. Currently there are programs in Hilo, across O'ahu and on Maui.
- Increased support for nurses beyond medical/surgical\* (generalist) roles, including emergency\*, critical care\*, pediatric intensive care, perinatal (labor and delivery)\*, neonatal intensive care\*, perioperative\* (surgical), pediatrics\*, oncology\* (cancer), cardiology\* and behavioral health\*.<sup>1</sup>
- Individualized and role specific support for new graduate nurses who are entering nursing during a global pandemic.
- Assurance of sustainability from participating hospitals that they will engage in funding years two to five in the Nurse Residency Program contract.

### Support for the Nurse Residency Program Model:

The American Academy of Nursing recommends that all newly graduated nurses employed in an acute care hospital setting receive transition to practice support through a formalized nurse residency program (Goode et al., 2018). Goode, et al, notes:

*“Providing care to hospitalized patients is now more complex due to increased patient acuity, shorter lengths of stay, significant documentation requirements, the need to coordinate care with other disciplines, and use of high-tech equipment in care delivery” (p1).*

The purpose of new graduate nurse residency programs is to support novice, newly licensed nurses in gaining competencies in the complex demands of the registered nurse role and decrease the first-year attrition rates that result in nurses not just leaving their role, but the profession entirely (HSCN, 2019b).

New graduate nurse residency programs often utilize incumbent nurses in the role of preceptors. This provides an added layer of mentorship and oversight while the nurse is transitioning into their new staff nurse role. A recent systematic review of literature finds that formal preceptor programs with education requirements, roles and responsibilities improve preceptor and overall nursing staff recruitment and retention (Goss, 2015).

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<sup>1</sup> Note, an \* next to a specialty indicates these specialties as high demand in the HAH HWI 2019 findings.

### Addressing Hawai'i's Workforce Development Aims:

Over half of Hawai'i's nursing program graduates from associate degree programs are aged 26 years or older with half of these individuals in the 31-50 year-old range. Additionally, 23% percent of baccalaureate prepared nurse graduates are age 26 years old or older with 10% in the 31-50 year-old range. This suggests that many pursuing nursing careers are seeking increased financial stability, likely moving from low-wage service jobs to a sustaining wage career with a promise of continual need. The Hawai'i Career Explorer identifies nurses as the second most in demand job in Hawai'i (UH Community Colleges, 2020)

For the organizations that offer a nurse residency program, which often offer higher wages than community-based nursing settings like nursing homes, entry into these residency programs are the only pathway into their employment. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics 2019 data, the average registered nurse salary in Hawai'i is \$104,000 whereas median household income ranges from \$56,000 in Hawai'i County to \$84,000 for the City and County of Honolulu (BLS, 2017; DataUSA, 2020). Considerable income gains upon entering a nursing career enables lower-wage income earning adults to move into a sustainable wage-earning career. The nurse residency program further benefits these individuals by increasing their likelihood of success as they transition into this role and decreasing their attrition from nursing, overall. Overall, the transition into nursing facilitates an individual and their family's economic security, thereby moving Hawai'i residents who may qualify for WIOA services into solid recession- and pandemic-proof careers. Additionally, the benefits to our community are exponentialized by expanding our capacity to care for our general health and well-being.

### Cost Benefit:

Nationally, transition to practice programs improve first year retention for newly graduated nurses from 82.5% to 94%, thus improving patient care, nursing satisfaction, and decreasing the cost of recruitment and retention for hospitals by \$48,000 and \$64,000 per nurse (HSCN Annual Report 2019).

The HealthStream product is valued at [REDACTED] per new graduate nurse and preceptor pair and a [REDACTED] onboarding cost per site. HealthStream has offered Hawai'i, if joining as the HNRPC, the reduced cost per resident/preceptor pair to [REDACTED], including Jane AI, an artificial intelligence (AI) system that personalizes competency development at scale, and has entirely waived the onboarding cost per site. The estimated cost savings are included below:

	Quoted Offer to HNRPC	Retail
Resident cost	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Preceptor	Included in resident cost, additional preceptor seats may be added for [REDACTED]/person	[REDACTED]
Onboarding cost	waived	\$10K site, 6 sites
Jane AI	included in resident cost	not included
State Total for [REDACTED] Resident/Preceptor Pairs	\$43,975.00	\$103,975

### Distribution Across Counties:

	Current Distribution of NRP access	Proposed Distribution of NRP Access <sup>2</sup>	Current Nurse Population Distribution
Honolulu C&C	65%	64%	74%
Maui	22%	<b>15%</b>	9%
Kauai	0%	<b>2%</b>	5%
Hawaii	14%	<b>20%</b>	12%
Total	100%	100%	100%

### Proposed Project:

In 2019, multiple HNRPC partners identified that the current product does not deliver evidence-based content or clear curriculum and established roles for preceptors. Instead, the current product provides a curriculum outline and places the burden of developing evidence-based content on the hospital's clinical nurse educator. After a review of products by our partners, a new product was identified that 1) enables each hospital to create a customized NRP program based on their individual community's and facility's needs, 2) provides current and evidence-based content to support learning, and 3) includes training for incumbent nurses who precept the nurse residents.

This proposal is for a fixed price contract to transition the Hawai'i Nurse Residency Collaborative to an enhanced residency platform that provides extensive opioid training during the transition to initial practice year for new graduate nurses in acute settings in Hawai'i.

### Deliverables and Funding Request:

90% of contract will be paid upon execution of the contract.

Timeline: November 1, 2020 – April 30, 2021

- ✓ Transition at least 75% current Hawai'i Nurse Residency Program Collaborative hospitals to an evidence based nurse residency program.
- ✓ Establish evidence-base preceptor training at 75% of current Hawai'i Nurse Residency Program Collaborative hospitals to support retention of new graduate nurses training.
- ✓ Expand Hawai'i Nurse Residency Program Collaborative membership to two additional rural hospitals: Wilcox Medical Center and North Hawai'i Community Health Center.
- ✓ Hawai'i Nurse Residency Program Collaborative commit to train 100 new grad nurses.
- ✓ Hawai'i Nurse Residency Program Collaborative commit to train 100 preceptors.

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<sup>2</sup> Note: Rates in bold indicate a greater representative sample than the current nursing population, showing a balancing of equity and access professional development and support to neighbor island nurses and communities.

Timeline: November 1, 2020 – June 30, 2020

- ✓ Provide in-kind transition support, through the HSCN, for all members of the collaborative.

State Total for █████ Resident/Preceptor Pairs	\$49,375.50
Interstate Department Administrative Fee for Federal Pass Through (25%)	\$10,993.75
Total	\$54,969.00

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**NOTE:** Upon request from HealthStream, pricing information has been redacted as confidential trade secret information.