



Northern Nursing Program

Annual Report 2016



UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN
College of Nursing
USASK.CA/NURSING



Introduction

In September 2012, the College of Nursing began offering a full Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree in Ile-a-la-Crosse and La Ronge. In order to keep our regional stakeholders informed about our programming in the past, we have provided semi-annual reporting on program indicators, such as student numbers and success rates, clinical placements, outreach and relevant research activities. Going forward, we are now moving to an annual reporting cycle, as we have developed additional and complementary means to communicate with our stakeholders in the Northern Administrative District.

We hope you enjoy this 2016 Annual Report. Please do not hesitate to contact us with questions or suggestions!



■ Student Applications for 2016/17 & Overall Student Demographics

The nursing student seat allocation for Northern Saskatchewan is officially 15 – normally five for Ile-a-la-Crosse and ten for La Ronge per academic year. In order to be admitted into the College of Nursing, prospective students must have successfully completed a pre-professional year of ten (30 credit units) Arts and Science classes, including Chemistry, Biology and Statistics. In addition, students need to be long term residents of the Northern Administrative District. The College has been slightly over filling seats in the past two years, to ensure all students who have met the prerequisites have access to the nursing program. Officially, students are admitted into the College of Nursing in “Year 2”.

In the Fall of 2016, the College admitted four Year 2 students to the Ile-a-la-Crosse site, and eight to La Ronge. All Year 2 students are of Aboriginal descent. In total, the Northern Nursing Program has 41 students: 17 students in Year 2, 20 students in Year 3 and four students in Year 4. We are very gratified to have seen steady growth in admissions in the past few years. Students currently come from the communities of Ile-a-la-Crosse, La Ronge, Buffalo Narrows, Pinehouse Lake, Southend, Air Ronge and Stanley Mission.

Within our current Northern cohort, 90% of students have self-declared as Aboriginal and all of them are female. In the future, it would be beneficial to recruit more male students into the program, as this would be significant in helping to shift to a more gender-proportional health care workforce, which may furthermore encourage men to engage with primary and preventive health care.

Overall, retention within the College of Nursing has remained high. Since

2015, there have been 14 graduates from the North, ten in 2015 and four in 2016. Although a number of students have fallen “out-of-cohort”, only three have discontinued the program since we began in 2012. Students, at all sites, have six years to complete the Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree, although the typical trajectory is one pre-professional year in Arts and Science, followed by three years with the College of Nursing.



(l to r) Janet McKenzie, Jeanne Kusch, Martin Roy, GERALYN CLARKE

■ Congratulations to our Graduates!

In May, we celebrated the successful completion of the Bachelor of Science of Nursing for GERALYN CLARKE, Jeanne Kusch, Janet McKenzie and Martin Roy with a graduation banquet well attended by family, friends and staff, faculty from Northlands College and the College of Nursing and other community stakeholders. The students officially convoked on June 2, 2016.

Clinical Placements

Clinical and lab experiences are integral to the College of Nursing's curriculum and individual student development. These types of experiences provide students with an opportunity to connect theory to practice and to further enhance and develop their nursing skills and knowledge.

The following chart outlines the clinical experiences for the northern nursing students in the 2016-17 academic year:

YEAR IN PROGRAM	COURSE	# OF STUDENTS	LOCATION OF PLACEMENT	TIME FRAME	CLINICAL HOURS
2	NURS 202	11 students; 8 - La Ronge 3 - Ile-a-la-Crosse	La Ronge Hospital Long Term Care Unit	Nov 29 & 30, Dec 3, 2016	24
			La Ronge Rural Acute Care		
			Keewatin Health Authority – St. Joseph's Hospital		
2	NURS 221	19 students; 12 - La Ronge 7 - Ile-a-la-Crosse	Meadow Lake and Battleford – Medical Acute Care	May 23 – June 23, 2017	144
3	NURS 333	15 students; 9 - La Ronge 6 - Ile-a-la-Crosse	Meadow Lake and Battleford – Medical Acute Care	Sept 24 – Nov 3, 2016	156
3	NURS 331	15 students; 9 - La Ronge 6 - Ile-a-la-Crosse	Victoria Hospital, Prince Albert Obstetrical Unit	May 23 – June 23, 2017	78
3	NURS 331	15 students; 9 - La Ronge 6 - Ile-a-la-Crosse	Victoria Hospital , Prince Albert Pediatric Unit	May 23 – June 23, 2017	78
3	NURS 308	17 students; 10 - La Ronge 7 - Ile-a-la-Crosse	La Ronge Community Mental Health, Inpatient Mental Health, Addictions Services, Mental Health	48 Hours; Jan 12 – May 16, 2017	48 Hours Community
			Jeannie Bird Clinic		
			Addictions Buffalo Narrows	96 Hours in Prince Albert; May 1 – 16, 2017 blocked clinical	96 Hours on Mental Health Unit in Prince Albert
			Addictions Ile-a-la-Crosse		
4	NURS 431	4 students; La Ronge only	Lac La Ronge Indian Band, Public Health and Home Care	Sept 12 – Nov 30, 2017	260
			Jeannie Bird Clinic		
			Mamawetan Churchill River Health Region Community Health and Home Care		
4	NURS 450	6 students; 4 - La Ronge 2 – Ile-a-la-Crosse	Final clinical placements open to both Prince Albert and North Campus students includes: La Loche Health Center St. Joseph Acute Care in Ile-a-la-Crosse	Jan 9, 2017 – April 6, 2017	360



Nursing students helped facilitate the HOPE Symposium for students in Northern Saskatchewan in November 2016

■ Employment in the North

As addressed in our Fall 2015 Semi-Annual Report, new graduates continue to experience challenges finding work in northern communities and northern health regions. Some of this difficulty relates to a requirement for Registered Nurses (RNs) to obtain a minimum of two to three years of nursing experience before being considered for employment within more isolated environments (for example, due to the need to work autonomously, requirements for Additional Authorized Practice and the complexity of nursing care in remote northern communities).

In December 2015, the College of Nursing organized a meeting in relation to employment of new graduates in Northern Saskatchewan. Stakeholders (Northern Inter-Tribal Health Authority, Kelsey Trail, Peter Ballantyne, Mamawetan Churchill River, Prince Albert Parkland and Athabasca health authorities) were engaged to discuss challenges and opportunities in the employment of new graduates; however, the problem remains unresolved. We know there are high turnover and vacancy rates; a 2012 report for the Northern Labour Market Health Sector Training Sub-Committee found that of all health professions facing a shortage in the region, Registered Nurses topped the list and there was an estimated annual need for 26 new Registered Nurses and Registered Psychiatric Nurses.

The College of Nursing is looking forward to continuing work with our stakeholders in developing creative approaches to the mentorship and development of our graduates' experience, while ensuring they have reasonable employment opportunities.

■ Student Supports and Mental Health

Given the recent tragedies this fall, the College acknowledges the past year has been a difficult one for many of our students and alumni. The College of Nursing has worked closely with Northlands College to ensure our students and their

families have access to mental health counselling and personal supports should anyone require additional support. Our thoughts are with everyone in the community dealing with the impacts of these tragedies.

■ Graduate Education Opportunities

The College of Nursing's Master of Nursing (MN) program is offered online, making it more accessible for Registered Nurses in rural and remote communities to complete the requirements without leaving home or interrupting their present employment.

In order to enhance Aboriginal representation in health care administration, advanced practice, teaching and research, the College of Nursing has established a \$5,000 entrance award for all First Nations, Métis and Inuit students accepted into any of our graduate programs [Master in Nursing (MN), Nurse

Practitioner (MN-NP) and Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing (PhD)].

The annual application deadline for both the Master of Nursing (thesis & course-based) and Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing program is February 15th and the Master of Nursing - Nurse Practitioner program deadline is April 1st.

To discuss the graduate program application process and opportunities, please contact Jill Brown, Graduate Program Coordinator, at (306) 966-6231 or jill.brown@usask.ca.



■ Innovative Learning Institute on Circumpolar Health

Almost three years ago, the College of Nursing helped create the Northern Nursing Education Network, which now includes fourteen institutions from seven countries. One of the Network's goals is to develop mobility and study abroad opportunities for northern and Indigenous nursing students. As reported in the Fall 2015 Semi-Annual Report, two Northern Saskatchewan students visited Yakutsk, Russia, in north eastern Siberia as a part of this initiative. This allowed the students to consider northern social determinants of health and health care practices from a completely different geographical context.

In August 2016, the College of Nursing hosted twelve students from 6 countries (Russia, Norway, Iceland, Greenland, Finland and Canada) in Saskatchewan, where they learned about northern health from a Saskatchewan perspective. Two students from the College of Nursing were also selected to participate in this initiative - Kaylee-Ann Irving (La Ronge) and Kristy Merasty

(Stanley Mission). This field course included a week of seminars and group activities at the University of Saskatchewan Saskatoon Campus, then the group headed north to La Ronge, Stanley Mission, Pinehouse Lake and Ile-a-la Crosse. The students learned about the different responsibilities and roles that northern Registered Nurses assume, Cree and Métis concepts of wellness and healing and strategies to address the primary health care needs of northern communities. They were also able to share ideas and lessons

learned from their own local contexts. In addition to learning, the group enjoyed excellent hospitality and are now expert connoisseurs of bannock!

Special thanks to: Karla Hardcastle, Guy Penney, Thomas Sierzycki, Andrew McLetchie, Cathy Wheaton, Don Caisse, Janet McKenzie, Phyllis Smith, Jeanne Kusch, Duane Favel, Vince Ahenakew, Jean-Marc Desmeules, the staff at Jim's Fishing Camp and everyone else who made the visit so memorable for the next generation of northern nurse leaders.



Student attendees gathered in Saskatoon before heading to Northern Saskatchewan



La Ronge nursing students at Indigenous Nurses Celebration Gala

■ Outreach and Engagement

- In January 2016, College of Nursing staff from the Prince Albert Campus travelled to La Ronge and provided lunch and a presentation about the nursing program to students of NORTEP and NORPAC, as well as the pre-professional students from Northlands College.
- Once again, the College of Nursing, in cooperation with the College of Medicine and the Northern Lights School Division, hosted the annual Northern Lights Youth Health Careers Symposium on March 15 and 16, 2016. In attendance were 17 high school students and 12 staff from the communities of Cumberland House, Beauval, Green Lake, La Loche, Pinehouse and Sandy Bay. Students participated in two days of health related, hands-on activities, which included suturing and casting, blood pressure and blood glucose testing. Each of these activities gave the students an opportunity to interact with health care professionals and students from the Colleges of Nursing and Medicine. This interprofessional event also included participation and presentations from other health care professions, including Nutrition and Physical Therapy.
- The College of Nursing co-sponsored and hosted a number of tours for the Northern Administrative Students Association (NASA) 5th Annual Exploration Conference on May 5, 2016, which sees high school students from across Northern Saskatchewan visit various post-secondary campuses in Saskatoon.
- Tracy Gobeil, Aboriginal Nursing Advisor for Prince Albert and Northern Campuses, attended the Keewatin Career Development Corporation's 30th Annual Career Symposium and Hands on Career Day in La Ronge on May 10, 2016. This event had several hundred high school and adult learners in attendance. In addition, Tracy and the College's Prince Albert Campus Professional Academic Advisor Pat Taciuk attended a number of high school career fairs throughout the North in order to increase the awareness of the College's learn where you live philosophy and share details about the undergraduate program.

■ Indigenous Nurses Celebration Gala

The College of Nursing hosted an Indigenous Nurses Celebration Gala on November 22, 2016 at the Top of the Inn Ballroom at the Sheraton Cavalier in Saskatoon, simultaneous with the First Nations Inuit Health Branch Regional Nursing Conference. We were delighted to see many northern nurses at the event, as well as four students from our La Ronge campus. The keynote speaker was Janet Spence-Fontaine, the College of Nursing's first known Aboriginal graduate (BSN '65). Her mother, Ruth, was born at Little Red River, and Janet spent part of her childhood in Stanley Mission.



Janet Spence-Fontaine



Prince Albert based Assistant Professor Geoffrey Maina simultaneously instructs students in Prince Albert, La Ronge and Ile-a-la-Crosse

Teaching & Connections

Historically, the distributed program relied on videoconference and the use of remote presence technology mostly originating from the Saskatoon Campus to provide education to the students enrolled in Ile-a-la-Crosse and La Ronge. This year marked a move to videoconferencing and providing remote presence from the Prince Albert Campus for

some classes. This also provided an opportunity for students in Prince Albert to experience distributed teaching, as faculty taught from the North for at least one class. This classroom 'swap' fostered relationships between students in the same student association and provided increased understanding of three different communities.

Previous Reports

- Four previous Northern Nursing Program Semi-Annual Reports dating to Fall 2013 are available on our website: www.usask.ca/nursing.

Mentorship

The College of Nursing is once again organizing mentorships for fourth year students who will convocate in the Spring of 2017. If you are a Registered Nurse of Aboriginal descent, or have significant experience working in First Nations and Métis communities, and are interested in being a mentor, please contact aboriginal.mentorship@usask.ca or apply to be a mentor by March 3, 2017 via: <http://www.usask.ca/nursing/aboriginal/docs/AboriginalMentorRegistration.pdf>.

■ ■ **For more information,
comments or suggestions,
please contact the following
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