

**NURSING SUPPLY AND DEMAND COUNCIL  
MINUTES  
July 9, 2020**

The Nursing Supply and Demand Council (NSDC) met on July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020, virtually via Zoom Meetings. Chair Cynthia Bienemy called the meeting to order at 1:06 p.m. The roll was called, and a quorum was established

**ROLL CALL**

**COUNCIL MEMBERS OR DESIGNEE PRESENT**

Chair Cynthia Bienemy, LA State Board of Nursing \*  
Vice Chair Bronwyn Doyle, LAICU \*  
Kenneth Alexander, LA Hospital Association  
Ahnyel Burkes, LA State Nurses Association \*  
Leann Fowler, LA Association of Nurse Practitioners\*  
(designee)  
Wendi Palermo, LCTCS System  
Wendy Bailes, LA Council of Admin. of Nursing  
Education  
Sandra Brown, Southern University School of Nursing  
Beth Norris, LA Organization for Nursing Leadership  
Cheryl Taylor, LA State Black Nurses Organization  
Christina Constanza, LA State Board of Practical Nurses  
(designee)  
Jaime Vicknair, LA School Nurses Organization  
(designee)  
Gail Gibson, Office of Public Health  
Nathalie Walker, LA Council of periOperative  
Registered Nurses  
Wes Hataway, LA Nursing Home Association  
Susannah Craig, Board of Regents

**COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT**

Jennifer Badeaux, Nurse Anesthetists \*

**GUESTS**

Cara Landry, Board of Regents  
Mellynn Baker, Board of Regents

\*Executive Members

**WELCOME/ INTRODUCTIONS**

Chair Dr. Cynthia Bienemy invited everyone to go around the table and introduce themselves.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes from the February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020, meeting was reviewed and approved.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS/ CONSENT AGENDA**

Dr. Bienemy announced to the Council that the 2019 NSDC Annual Report was submitted to the Chair of the Health Works Commission (HWC) on March 9, 2020 and was approved by the HWC at the

July 1st meeting. She stated that the report included 13 recommendations from the NSDC that were developed prior to the impact that was felt by the COVID-19 pandemic. In light of the tremendous impact that the pandemic has had on the nursing practice and education in Louisiana, Dr. Bienemy asked that the Council come together and compile additional recommendations that can then be brought to the HWC.

## THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON LOUISIANA'S NURSING EDUCATION CAPACITY AND NURSING WORKFORCE: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- A. **Nursing Education Capacity – Brief Overview of LaCANE's COVID-19 Survey –**  
Dr. Wendy Bailes briefed the Council of the LaCANE's COVID-19 survey preliminary findings. She stated that 19 LaCANE member institutions responded and the overall response was that many were forced to react on a dime and use resources and supplies that were never intended for this use. Dr. Bronwyn Doyle echoed Dr. Bailes statement and mentioned that her institution, FranU, had to supply local hospitals with PPEs that were intended for student use in their simulation labs.
- B. **Nursing Workforce: Hospital Settings –** Mr. Kenneth Alexander, LA Hospital Association, and Ms. Beth Norris, LA Organization for Nursing Leadership spoke of the lack of available supplies that were needed in rural hospitals. Mr. Alexander also mentioned that there was a lack of funding for not only supplies and equipment, but also for payroll for employees. The use of traveling nurses is expensive. Ms. Norris informed the Council that due to a different kind of nursing environment (just the nurse and the patient; no visitors and no personal contact), the moving of areas, and the risk of getting sick caused many nurses to take leave and stay home or to just resign. Nurses are working in extremely stressful environments and need mental health support.
- C. **Nursing Workforce: Long Term Care –** Mr. Wes Hataway, LA Nursing Home Association, reported that this pandemic exposed what great partnerships they have with LPN Board, LCTCS, etc. He stated that these groups made sure that the nursing home facilities were staffed with LPNs. Mr. Hataway mentioned that though there is a solid framework in place for responding to this pandemic, there are still some gaps that need to be filled such as providing students the opportunity to continue their clinicals, certification of temporary workers and decreasing the length of time for licensing new LPN graduates. He also would like to see nurse capitation funding continued. LTC did loose some workers during the height of the pandemic.
- D. **APRN Workforce –** Ms. Leann Fowler, LA Association of Nurse Practitioners, reported that many nurse practitioners (NP) were out of work if their physician was sick or unable to work and some were laid off in the beginning of the pandemic. Acute care NPs assisted with community testing. Some NPs worked as RNs within the hospital setting. She also stated that some NPs were able to work without the standard restrictions due to the Governor's executive order which provided for continuity of care.
- E. **LPN Workforce - Ms.** Christina Constanza, LA State Board of Practical Nurses, thanked Mr. Wes Hataway and Mr. Mark Berger, LA Nursing Home Association for reaching out to the Board stating that they were in need of LPNs. She stated that if a nursing home would hire a graduate prior to taking their licensure test, then a temporary license was issued. Ms. Constanza explained that those temporary licenses would expire in 8 weeks or until the student took their test. She suggested that as hospitals plan for the future, they should think of lengthening and enhancing their orientation period in order to allow graduates and new nurses to gain that hands-on experience that they missed because of COVID. Dr. Wendi

Palermo, LCTCS, shared with the Council that some of her students at her campuses were able to graduate early and obtain their temporary licenses in order to work on the front lines. She also mentioned that working with the regulatory agencies, building and strengthening relationships, streamlining processes, and eliminating barriers are some of the good things that have come out of this pandemic.

**F. Certified Nursing Assistants** – Dr. Palermo shared with the Council that the Prometric test used for nursing assistant (NA) programs may have been an unintentional barrier to students that desired to become NAs due to the cost of the test (\$125). By eliminating the test this summer, they were able to go from 0 to 300 NA certifications.

**G. Nursing Workforce: Public Health** – Ms. Gail Gibson, Office of Public Health, shared with the Council that all public health workforce has been providing direct services either to patients or health systems. She also mentioned that all direct care sites, emergency operation centers, as well as the Public Health office have been open and working remotely when feasible. They have been providing “strike teams” for nursing homes and COVID camps around the state as well as the monitoring station at the Convention Center in New Orleans. Ms. Gibson stated that one matter that hasn’t been mentioned by other groups is the concern for nurses, nursing assistants, and nurse aids that are vulnerable and do not feel safe providing these medical services. She also clarified that there were no furloughs for public health nurses and that those that could not provide direct services were assigned to other duties. Ms. Gibson added that two months ago a tele-health service was created for reproductive health services and specialty clinics for children with special needs.

#### POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Develop a statewide transition to practice program as a bridge that would target new graduates that graduated early because of the pandemic and new graduates that graduated on time but were hired during the pandemic and may not have gone through an extensive onboarding, preceptorship, mentorship program due to the pandemic.
2. Increase the use of tele-health services to enhance continuity of care.
3. Streamline process to get nursing assistants certified.
4. Develop a process that can capture good data on nursing assistants, either certified or not, that are currently in the workforce.
5. Provide additional funding for technology, that is normally incurred by the schools to help educate students and support retention.
6. Increase academic practice partnership in regard to the pandemic.

Due to time constraints, Dr. Bienemy asked that the Council create a list of recommendations based on today’s discussion and submit them to her for compiling and disbursement to the Council for prioritizing by July 16<sup>th</sup>.

**On the motion of Dr. Bienemy, and seconded by Dr. Bronwyn Doyle, the Council approved that recommendations brought forth by members of the Nursing Supply and Demand Council, based on today’s meeting discussion, will be submitted to the Council Chair by July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020 where they will then be brought before the Health Works Commission for approval.**

#### NEXT MEETING DATES

Ms. Cara Landry stated that the next Healthworks Commission meeting will be held on August 18<sup>th</sup>. The meeting will be both virtual and in person.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Cheryl Taylor, LA Black Nurses Association, posed a question she received from a consumer. She asked that when a state of emergency is declared by the Governor, if there has been negligence or if something were to happen during an event, that people are immune to being sued? Ms. Nathalie Walker, LA Council of Perioperative Registered Nurses, stated that she heard there is a discussion in federal legislation that healthcare providers and healthcare organizations will be protected from liability due to the COVID pandemic. Mr. Hataway clarified that there is a statute in the books that during a public health emergency the standard of negligence increases to gross negligence or willful misconduct once proved.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:34 p.m.

*In absence of a quorum, the NSDC Executive Committee is authorized to hear the agenda and take action as required. Executive Committee Members are:*

*LSBN Cynthia Bienemy, Chair  
LSNA Lisa Deaton/Ahnyel Burkes  
LANA Jennifer Badeaux*

*LANP Kathy Baldrige  
LAICU Bronwyn Doyle, Vice Chair*