



Workforce Alert

Latest information on hospitals' attraction and retention of talent:

August 12, 2005

Topics:

1. **OONE and ONA Discuss the Nursing Profession**
2. **Hospital Employment Climbs in July**
3. **National Health Information Network**
4. **Senate Appropriations Subcommittee Approves Spending Bill**
5. **Study of Hospitals Highlights Shortage of Allied Health Professionals**
6. **Xavier University Receives Grant to Support Nursing**
7. **Feature on the Shortage of Nurses**
8. **AONE Endorses Nursing Education Bills**
9. **American Cancer Society Offers Scholarships in Cancer Nursing**
10. **Columbus State Offers Online Health Care Manager Certificate**
11. **Job of the Month**

1. OONE and ONA Discuss the Nursing Profession

The Ohio Organization for Nurse Executive (OONE) and the Ohio Nurses Association (ONA) have agreed to begin a collaborative relationship and discuss mutual issues of concern, including issues related to nurse staffing. The first discussion was held June 30 at Children's Hospital in Columbus. Nine representatives from ONA and nine from OONE participated in the conversation, hosted by OHA staff. The meeting resulted in a joint statement addressing the future of nursing in 2015 and all participants agreed to work on defining next steps to help reach the intended outcomes of the statement. The next meeting is scheduled for Sept. 29. OHA will provide further information as the groups approve the statement and agree upon activities and strategies relative to mutual issues of concern.

2. Hospital Employment Climbs in July

Employment at the nation's hospitals rose 0.19 percent in July to a seasonally adjusted 4,381,100 people, the Bureau of Labor Statistics recently reported. This number is 8,200 more than in June and 84,900 more than a year ago. Without seasonal adjustment, the numbers show hospitals employed 4,398,100 people in July, 14,300 more than in June and 86,900 more than a year ago. The nation's overall unemployment rate was unchanged in July at 5 percent. *(Source: AHA News)*

3. National Health Information Network

A recent study in the *Annals of Internal Medicine* reports that connecting health care providers to a national health information network could require \$156 billion in capital investment and \$48 billion in annual operating costs. This includes an estimated \$50.7 billion in capital and \$12.8 billion in

operating costs for hospitals, largely to implant needed functionality, such as electronic medical records.

Experts predict consumers will be a major driver of health information exchange once patients see firsthand how electronic health records increase efficiency, reduce medical errors and ultimately drive down health care costs. David Brailer, national health information technology coordinator, said patients will feel empowered by their ability to view their records electronically once issues related to privacy and data security are resolved. It is recommended by patients begin a dialogue about electronic records with their health care providers, and choose hospitals and doctors that share their views about information technology. David Brailer also said certifying electronic health products was an important objective that would allow providers to determine whether more costly systems truly provide advanced features. (Source: AHA News; Modern Healthcare Alert)

4. Senate Appropriations Subcommittee Approves Spending Bill

The U.S. Senate Labor and Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations Subcommittee approved a federal fiscal year 2006 spending plan that restores funding for health professions programs that would be eliminated under President George Bush's budget and cut in the House version. The Senate version also provides an increase above the House appropriations bill to many other programs of interest to hospitals.

The subcommittee voted to appropriate \$454 million for health professions, \$156.6 million for nursing programs and level funds for pediatric graduate medical education at \$300 million. The bill also recommends \$39.2 million for rural outreach grants, \$39.2 million for rural FLEX grants, \$8.8 million for rural health policy development and \$8.3 million for state offices of rural health. The panel also recommended funding hospital bioterrorism efforts at \$510 million and health information at \$95.2 million.

Sen. Mike DeWine(R-OH) was among those supporting the improvements for health care. The full Senate Appropriations Committee is expected to take up the subcommittee's bill, and congressional debate on the spending plans will continue throughout the summer. The U.S. House and Senate must agree on a final version of the FY06 federal appropriations package by mid-September.

5. Study of Hospitals Highlights Shortage of Allied Health Professionals

Maryland Hospital Association reported that registered nurse vacancies reached a five-year low but vacancies for hospital respiratory therapist reached a five-year high of 17 percent in 2004. Both Maryland and Mississippi reported that shortages in critical allied health personnel continue to grow. Physical therapist vacancies in both states are high. Maryland has a 16 percent and Mississippi is at a 22 percent vacancy. Mississippi's hospitals are having a difficult time recruiting Physical Therapist. (AHA News Now)

6. Xavier University Receives Grant to Support Nursing

The Department of Nursing at Xavier University will receive a \$200,000 grant for over two years from the Ohio Board of Nursing, Nurse Education Grant Program. The grant will create teaching assistant positions for graduate students in nursing. Xavier will partner with Good Samaritan College of Nursing and Health Science to create these positions.

Dr. Linda Schmid, assistant nursing professor and project director at Xavier, stated that in addition to the nursing shortage, there is also a shortage of nursing faculty. The goal of the grant is to encourage students to pursue teaching roles and help them advance into faculty roles.

Four teaching assistants will be hired in the fall and serve as instructors in practicum/clinical courses in Xavier's undergraduate nursing program and in the Associate of Science in Nursing program at Good

Samaritan Hospital. Eight assistants will be hired next year. The teaching assistants will be recruited from Xavier nursing graduate students, specifically those who are studying to be nursing educators.

The grant will also be used to purchase a human patient simulator. The high-fidelity patient simulator will help students with their assessment skills and self-confidence in the clinical arena.

7. Feature on the Shortage of Nurses

A July 24 article in the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* focused on the nursing shortage. It included several best practices for creating environments that attract and retain talented staff. View the article online at http://www.cleveland.com/search/index.ssf?/base/sunday_mag/1122111299265660.xml?magaz&coll=2

8. AONE Endorses Nursing Education Bills

The American Organization of Nurse Executives (AONE) sent letters to members of Congress endorsing two important bills that would help expand nursing education opportunities. The Nurse Education, Expansion and Development (NEED) Act of 2005, sponsored by Reps. Nita Lowey (D-NY), Lois Capps (D-CA) and Peter King (R-NY) would authorize capitation grants for schools of nursing to increase the number of faculty, retain current faculty, aid student recruitment, expand clinical lab space and expand capacity in other ways. It would also require schools to expand accelerated BSN programs, increase the enrollment of minority and disadvantaged students, develop post-baccalaureate residency programs and expand the role of nurse-managed health clinics in the clinical education of nursing students. AONE is particularly pleased that the grant awards would be tied to an 80 percent passage rate on the NCLEX and a program graduation rate of not less than 80 percent. The Nurse Faculty Education Act of 2005, sponsored by Sens. Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) and John Cornyn (R-TX) would provide financial support for the hiring new faculty and retaining existing faculty, purchase of educational resources and additional classroom space, and assistance to graduates who agree to work as nursing faculty.

9. American Cancer Society Offers Scholarships in Cancer Nursing

The American Cancer Society is inviting applications from master's and doctoral students for support of graduate study. The Master's Degree Scholarships in Cancer Nursing will be awarded to graduate students pursuing master's degrees in cancer nursing. Awards are offered for up to two years in the annual amount of \$10,000. Doctoral Degree Scholarships in Cancer Nursing will be awarded to graduate students pursuing doctoral study in the following cancer fields: research, education, administration or clinical practice. Awards will be offered for up to four years with a stipend of \$15,000 per year. The application deadline is Dec. 1. For a full description of all American Cancer Society grants, including applications, instructions and policies go to visit www.cancer.org/research or e-mail grants@cancer.org

10. Columbus State Offers Online Health Care Manager Certificate

Columbus State Community College will offer a new online Health Care Manager Certificate program beginning this fall, making it accessible to those beyond the Columbus area for the first time.

Another first for the program is that participants will be able to complete the certificate in four quarters. The program is an opportunity for health care workers currently serving as managers, and those preparing for entry level management positions, to update their skills or prepare for new positions. Courses include legal aspects of health care management, risk management, management training for supervisors, human resource management and more.

The fall quarter begins Sept. 21 and registration is already in progress. For more information, contact Peggy Mayo, Columbus State Community College's Health Care Manager Program coordinator, at pmayo@csc.edu, or 614.287.2608.

11. Job of the Month

The system administrator installs new software releases, assists in upgrades, evaluates and installs patches and resolves software-related problems of an organization's LAN, WAN, network segment, internet or intranet system.

The typical duties include performing system backups and recovery, maintaining all data files and monitoring system configuration to ensure data integrity. The system administrator also provides technical support for all operating systems and maintains interfaces with computer operation and other system software.

A system administrator is required to have a bachelor's degree in information technology or a related field.

The average starting salary is \$27,680 – \$48,440 per year with the growth expected to remain healthy as organizations continue to adopt and integrate increasingly sophisticated technology. This information is provided by a publication offered by the Akron Regional Hospital Association that offers an overview and examples of the many types of jobs available in the field of health care. It describes careers for those interested in working closely with patients and others, and also for those drawn to technology or advanced support services. To see the publication visit the *OHA Workforce Forum* at www.ohanet.org/workforce/toolkit.htm.

OHA Workforce Update

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