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Impact of the Emerging Health Professionals Program on Nursing Career Trajectory within the Lehigh Valley Health Network

Brooke Wunderler & Kerri Green, EdD, MS - Lehigh Valley Health Network

BACKGROUND

- The challenges brought on by the national nursing shortage have severe implications for healthcare and patient outcomes.^{1,2}
- By 2026, Pennsylvania is projected to experience a shortage of over 20,000 nurses and a position vacancy rate of 30%; the worst of all states nationwide.³
- Career & Technical Education (CTE) programs, such as the Emerging Health Professionals, provide students professional development skills, challenging academic courses and hands-on experiences, positively impacting their workforce preparedness.⁴

Aging Population

Aging Workforce

Retention Concerns

Recruitment Efforts

OBJECTIVE

To explore the impact of the Emerging Health Professionals Program (EHP), a high school Career & Technical Education (CTE) program, on nursing career trajectory within the Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN).

METHODS

RESEARCH

Literature Review

PROCESS

Identify EHP Alumni in Nursing Careers at LVHN (42) & Create Survey

COLLECT

Distribute Survey & Interview Participants (4)

ANALYZE

Determine EHP's Impact on LVHN Nurses

RESULTS

Table 1: Respondents by Job (n=24)

Profession	
Registered Nurse	63%
Nurse Extern	25%
Advanced Practice Nurse	8%
Clinical Coordinator	4%

Table 2: Acquired Skills through EHP (n=24)

Skill	
Interpersonal Skills	88%
Professionalism	100%
Critical Thinking	75%
Networking Abilities	79%
Leadership	58%

Figure 1: Contributions of EHP Program on Path to Nursing Careers at LVHN

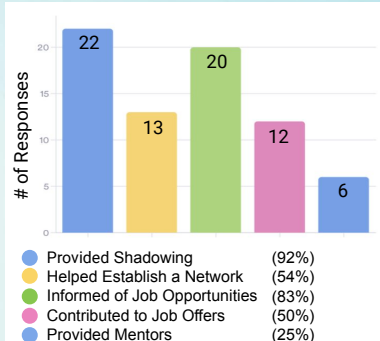


Figure 2: Participant Voted Most Influential Aspect of EHP

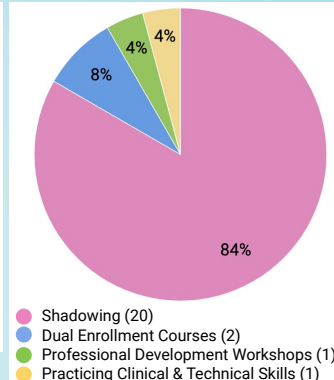


Figure 3: Quotes from Interviewed Respondents (n=4)

"Through shadowing, you got to see the good and the bad. It showed you skills you might have to do and made it easier to imagine yourself in that role."

"EHP prepared me well to be a nurse extern at LVHN. I feel comfortable and know how to be efficient and helpful in my role."

"EHP gave a lot of opportunity for connections to be made."

"The EHP program encouraged me to apply for a job in the network."

CONCLUSIONS

- Focus on career exploration (shadowing) was critical to recruiting individuals to nursing.
- EHP increased confidence and preparedness in individuals pursuing nursing by strengthening critical thinking skills, improving leadership capabilities and interpersonal skills.
- EHP's affiliation with LVHN enabled connections and mentorships between students and practicing professionals that directly contributed to their future employment with LVHN.
- Emphasis should be placed on growing CTE programs in order to foster a competent and passionate nursing workforce.

Literature Review
& Resources →



Learn more about the Emerging
Health Professionals Program →



Survey Template →



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