

Geropsychiatric Nursing Collaborative: A John A. Hartford Foundation Funded Project of the American Academy of Nursing

Overview

The Geropsychiatric Nursing Collaborative (GPNC) was initiated in January 2008 supported by a grant from the John A. Hartford Foundation with infrastructure housed in the American Academy of Nursing. The Leadership Team established an ambitious plan to achieve its goal *‘to improve the quality of mental health care provided to older adults by enhancing the knowledge and skills of nurses.’*

The aims of the project are to:

- include of geropsychiatric nursing **core competencies** at all levels of nursing education, and
- develop and disseminate geropsychiatric nursing **curriculum content** for implementation in basic, graduate and continuing educational programs.

Core Competencies

To address the core competency objective, the Leadership Team searched, collated and synthesized background materials and mapped this information to relevant competencies/essentials. A Core Competency Workgroup developed a set of competency **enhancements** for entry level and advanced practice level nurses in gerontologic, psychiatric and other APN programs whose graduates will likely practice with older adults.

These competency statements will demonstrate utility within a known framework rather than imposing something new. *Note that the project is NOT attempting to develop competencies for a new subspecialty*, but rather suggesting how current specialists and generalists ought to be able to care for elders with mental health concerns (consistent with the newly approved NASBN document on advanced practice). Thus, the statements will enhance and focus extant competencies, targeting them to older adults with mental health/illness concerns and using the most common domains.

Curriculum Content

To address the curriculum objective, the GPNC will undertake the following:

- Conduct a targeted curricular scan.
- Collaborate with professional and educational organizational partners to infuse geropsychiatric nursing content into all levels of nursing education
- Disseminate geropsychiatric nursing content and materials at the graduate/postgraduate level
- Secure and provide technical assistance and consultation to enhance faculty adoption and use of curriculum materials at the graduate/postgraduate level

Evaluation

Throughout the life of the grant, the Leadership Team will work closely with the John A. Hartford Foundation’s evaluator to track GPNC progress.