

Title

Pediatric Nurse Practitioner Programs: A Dual Track for Acute Care and Primary Care

Key Words: Dual track, PNP program, academic, primary care, acute care, recommendations

Abstract

Concerns about cost of healthcare are matched by greater insistence upon quality, safety and access for all. Pediatric nurse practitioners (PNPs) play increasingly important roles in newly designed paradigms of care. Numerous issues related to physician shortages, efforts to reduce healthcare costs, fewer residency hours, a need for coordination of care with community providers, the increasing number of children living with acute and chronic health conditions, and ongoing attention to unmet primary care needs of the child, have resulted in increasing numbers of PNPs being employed in settings requiring primary and acute care PNP skills and knowledge. Subsequently, nursing educators face pressing demands to foster changes in educational programs of PNPs that can meet these needs for expansion of the traditional PNP roles. Simultaneously, the growing interest in the DNP offers nursing educators new avenues to examine expanded clinical training for many PNPs.

The results of this study will outline a proposed “dual tract” comprehensive PNP educational program whose graduates are prepared to provide health care to children across the continuum of health and illness and who will be eligible to be certified as both acute and primary care pediatric nurse practitioners. Support for this project comes from collaboration with the Association of Faculties of PNP and funded by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN). Results of this current study will be shared and will help to clarify the necessary coursework, clinical experiences, and hours necessary to prepare students to assure competency as both acute and primary care PNPs. Completion options for those PNPs already trained in primary or acute care in Post-Master’s or DNP Programs will also be formulated and recommendations will be presented to the NCSBN.

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Purpose: To determine new recommendations for educational preparation necessary for the acute and primary care (dually prepared) PNP.

Data sources:

Hyperlink to 'Pediatric Nurse Practitioner Programs: A Dual Track for Acute and Primary Care' survey on Survey Monkey.

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=SIby_2f_2b0Gdh5jE4_2bbrsKylQ_3d_3d

The password is: PNPsurvey09

Phone interview survey regarding PNP's perceptions of their blended role practice in relation to educational preparation and skill level.

Conclusions:

Upon completion of this project, recommendations will go forward to NCSBN for an acute and primary care dual track PNP program and it is the suspicion of this author that other dual track programs will emerge from this model, for example a dual track gerontological nurse practitioner (GNP) acute and primary program.

Implications for practice:

Upon acceptance of this committee's recommendations to the NCSBN, academic PNP programs nationwide will be able to follow guidelines set for dual track program development and implementation. This will be a major step toward ensuring access to safe, quality, and seamless care for the public as well as supporting the ability of all APRN's to practice fully without regional and arbitrary restrictions. Yet each state will ultimately make their own decisions about endorsement and adaptation of these new standards. It is possible that individual states will continue to make individual decisions regardless of these national recommendations. Yet it is evident that even those states will benefit in their decision making by the accumulation of data and the presentation of evidence this study will provide.