

An Aging Patient Population: The Challenge for Nursing

Walk into the average hospital or clinic, and about half of the patients you see will be over 65. Today, older adults represent nearly 50% of hospital days, and 60% of all ambulatory adult primary care visits. They also account for 70% of all home care visits and represent 85% of residents in nursing homes.

Nurses provide health care in all of these settings, so one might expect that many nurses already have special preparation in aging. Of today's 2.7 million registered nurses, however, less than 1% are certified in gerontological nursing. Only 3% of advanced practice nurses have specialized training in this area. And though schools of nursing have made significant progress in recent years, only one out of three baccalaureate degree nursing programs has a required course in geriatrics.

In light of what is already happening—and what will certainly happen in the future—there is a critical need not only to prepare more geriatric specialists in nursing, but to ensure all nurses are “aging-savvy”—that is, knowledgeable and skilled in addressing the unique health care needs of older adults.

“Aging-Savvy” Nurses: Central to the Care of Older Adults

A unique, multi-faceted initiative, the HGNI enhances the care of older adults through innovations in nursing practice, education, research, leadership, and policy.

Promoting state-of-the-art care

Given older adults' complex problems and chronic illnesses, aging-savvy nurses strengthen clinical outcomes and enhance quality of life. Research has already demonstrated that nurses— independently, and in well-coordinated health care teams—can improve the treatment of a variety of diseases and optimize the care of older adults.

Encouraging better education

At schools of nursing, knowledge about aging is fundamental to preparing the current and next generation of nurses. This geriatric expertise will create a nursing workforce matched to the needs of aging patients.

Enhancing specialty nursing

For clinicians, educators, and researchers already in the profession, aging can be integrated into virtually every nursing specialty—from mental health to cardiology. These cross-discipline opportunities can enable specialists to enrich their practice, research, and teaching.

Building leaders for today—and tomorrow

Academic and clinical nurse leaders in geriatrics and gerontology have the theoretical knowledge and practical experience to strengthen our health care systems today and throughout the 21st Century.

Informing policy

Aging-savvy nurses are well prepared and positioned to help craft new state and national policies that improve the care of older adults.

HGNI

Hartford Geriatric Nursing Initiative

Older adults are the core business of health care today, and nurses—central to the health care of all older adults—are responding to the challenge.



Learn more at www.HGNI.org

Hartford Geriatric Nursing Initiative (HGNI)

Launched in 1995, the Hartford Geriatric Nursing Initiative (HGNI) is confronting the challenges associated with an aging patient population through an array of programs. With a \$60 million investment from the John A. Hartford Foundation, the HGNI is preparing professional nurses to play leadership roles in improving the health of older adults.

In partnership with the nation's nursing schools and a variety of health care organizations and systems, this dynamic, national initiative works in five areas:

- Shaping nursing **practice** to best meet the health care needs of older adults;
- Enhancing professional **education** to ensure all nurses are prepared to treat older adults;
- Promoting **research** needed to guide the care and promote the health of older adults;
- Developing **leadership** in academic and professional settings; and
- Demonstrating nursing's commitment to enacting **public policy** that improves older Americans' health care.

HGNI: Programs and Projects

The work of the HGNI is accomplished through numerous programs and projects administered by the following national centers:

The John A. Hartford Foundation Institute for Geriatric Nursing at New York University College of Nursing

The only one of its kind in the country, the Hartford Institute, part of the College of Nursing at New York University, features programs in practice, education, research, and policy. These nationally acclaimed efforts include the dissemination of model geriatric-enhanced nursing curricula, high quality teaching materials, practitioner-friendly assessment tools (including the "Try This" series), the NICHE program to improve hospital-wide care to older adults, an on-line gerontological nursing certification review course, a scholars and fellows summer research program, the Nurse Competence in Aging program, and the "Nursing Counts" newsletter published in the *American Journal of Nursing*—all designed to strengthen both the individual nurse's competence and the systems in which nurses learn and work.

Directors:

Elizabeth Capezuti, PhD, RN, APRN-BC, FAAN
Mathy Mezey, EdD, RN, FAAN
Terry Fulmer, PhD, RN, FAAN
www.hartfordnig.org

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN): Geriatric Nursing Education Project

AACN administers two complementary HGNI programs. The first prepares a cadre of nursing faculty with the necessary knowledge, skills, and resources to strengthen geriatric content in senior-level baccalaureate program courses. Nurse educators completing this program will be expected to share their new expertise with their faculty colleagues and students. This initiative builds on a previous Hartford Foundation-AACN effort to stimulate the creation of geriatric-focused curricula for baccalaureate and graduate nursing programs. The second AACN initiative, the Creating Careers program, awards scholarship monies to schools of

nursing to expand opportunities for students to establish a career in geriatric advanced practice nursing.

Executive Director: Geraldine Bednash, PhD, RN, FAAN
www.aacn.nche.edu/education/hartford/index.htm

The American Academy of Nursing (AAN): Building Academic Geriatric Nursing Capacity

The AAN builds capacity by: 1) coordinating centers of excellence at five of the nation's top schools of geriatric nursing (see below), 2) funding scholars and fellows, who are the faculty and management leaders of the future, and 3) building interdisciplinary research competencies in academic geriatric nurses. All of these efforts are designed to promote leadership, research, and best practice models that foster geriatric excellence throughout the nursing profession.

Program Directors:

Patricia Archbold, DNSc, RN, FAAN: 2005–2011
Claire M. Fagin, PhD, RN, FAAN: 2000–2005
www.geriatricnursing.org

Centers of Geriatric Nursing Excellence

Oregon Health Sciences University School of Nursing
Heather Young, PhD, GNP, FAAN: Director 2005–2011
www.ohsu.edu/hartfordcgne

University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences College of Nursing

Claudia Beverly, PhD, RN, FAAN: Director 2000–2011
hartfordcenter.uams.edu

University of California San Francisco School of Nursing

Margaret Wallhagen, PhD, GNP, CS: Director: 2006–2011
www.nurseweb.ucsf.edu/www/hcgne.htm

University of Iowa College of Nursing

Kathleen Buckwalter, PhD, RN, FAAN: Director 2006–2011
www.nursing.uiowa.edu/hartford/index.htm

University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing

Neville Strumpf, PhD, CS, FAAN: Director 2000–2011
www.nursing.upenn.edu/centers/hcgne

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