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**Background:**

A stated objective of the Utah SIP program is to increase the gender, racial, and ethnic diversity of new RN graduates. Utah nursing leaders strongly believe that this diverse nursing workforce will directly contribute to improved quality of care and enhanced patient satisfaction. To that end, the Utah Action Coalition for Health (UACH) members have worked closely with the Nurse Residency partners to develop ways to track, monitor, and increase the diversity of Utah's RN workforce. A copy of the UACH members is attached to this document for your reference (please see *Appendix 1*).

**Problem:**

As work began on this objective, it became apparent that data was lacking on the RN workforce in several areas including:

1. Workforce Data
2. Licensed RN Data
3. Nursing School Data
4. Nurse Residency Program Data

The first step was to begin creating a database that will track diversity data in the identified problem areas and begin to monitor future trends.

**Action Steps:**

*Formation of the Nursing Workforce Information Center/Utah Medical Education Council*

In 2013, the Utah State Legislature expanded the Utah Medical Education Council's (UMEC) workforce research responsibilities to focus on the nursing profession. UMEC now officially houses a Nursing Workforce Information Center. UMEC now collects data on nurse supply, demand, and education and this information can be accessed through their website at [www.utahmec.org](http://www.utahmec.org).

At the initiation of this project, diversity data was not collected on the Utah RN workforce and in 2012, only gender information was available. We are pleased to report that diversity data on the Utah RN workforce is now being collected at the time of RN license renewals, effective for the 2014 UMEC report. Furthermore, extensive data, including diversity information, is also collected on all licensed advanced practice nurses (APRNs). SIP program staff worked closely with the UMEC/Nursing Workforce Center to update the data elements to be collected on all license renewals for RNs and APRNs. A diversity collection question is presently included on the RN survey. Effective September 2014, a survey, with repeated reminders throughout October –



December 2014, were mailed to all Utah licensed RNs. UMEC is presently compiling the data from this survey and we look forward to the release of the complete data set in the near future. However, as a courtesy to the UACH, UMEC staff did a special data run, and analysis, in January 2015 of the diversity of Utah’s present nursing workforce from the recent RN surveys for inclusion in this final diversity report for our SIP 1 grant. We sincerely appreciate the UMEC for doing this extra work for the UACH and this level of cooperation is indicative of the excellent working relationship we have with UMEC.

The following is a chart comparing the percent of Utah’s nursing students with a minority classification, compared to the total number of Utah’s nursing students (excluding LPNs, Master’s PhD, and DNP nursing students) and the percentage of minority nurse residents, compared to the total number of nurse residents:

Table 1	Native American	Asian	African American	Pacific Islander and Native Hawaiian	Two or More Races	Missing or Unknown	Hispanic
Associate Degree Nursing Students (Generic and Bridge)	0.9%	2%	0.9%	0%	1.4%	3.6%	14%
Baccalaureate Nursing Students (Generic and 2 <sup>nd</sup> Degree)	0.2%	3%	1.3%	0%	0.7%	1.7%	11%
Nurse Residents (REDCap Data)	2.2%	0%	0%	1.1%	0%	0%	4.4%
U.S. Census Data (Utah)	1.5%	2.2%	1.3%	1.0%	----	---	13.3%

The UMEC RN and APRN surveys will be important vehicles for nurses to track the diversity of Utah’s nursing workforce and monitor how we are progressing towards meeting our diversity objectives. UMEC is presently compiling the data from this survey and we look forward to the release of this data in the near future. This survey, which will be repeated in the years to come, will be instrumental in measuring our programs toward increased nursing workforce diversity in Utah.

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Additionally, UACH and SIP leaders were asked to write a letter of recommendation in January 2014 for the UMEC's application for membership in the National Forum of State Nursing Workforce Centers (NFSNWC). This letter was submitted to NFSNWC in February 2014. Our application for membership was accepted and Utah data will now be benchmarked with national nursing workforce data.

*Utah Organization of Nurse Leaders/Academic Leadership Committee Survey of Nursing Students*

Each academic nursing program in Utah collects data on the types and numbers of nursing students enrolled in these programs. This data is collected on an individual program basis and summary data is compiled by the Utah Organization of Nurse Leaders (UONL), Academic Leadership Committee (ALC). The ALC is composed of all of the deans of Utah's nursing academic programs and serves to coordinate progressive nursing education initiatives statewide.

The following are the types of data collected by the UONL/ALC (by school/college and total statewide):

- Number of nursing school applications received
- Number of qualified applicants
- Number of students accepted to the nursing program
- Number of students enrolled
- Percent of students that graduate
- Percent of white (non-Hispanic) students enrolled
- Percent of Black/African-American (non-Hispanic) students enrolled
- Percent of Asian (non-Hispanic) students enrolled
- Percent of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (non-Hispanic) students enrolled
- Percent of American Indian/Alaskan Native (non-Hispanic) students enrolled
- Percent of Hispanic/Latino (any race) students enrolled

*REDCap Diversity Data on Nurse Residents*

Diversity information is collected on all nurse residents through the SIP grant. A broadened definition of diversity, to incorporate first generation college students and urban vs. rural students, was implemented in the spring of 2014 based on input from the UACH and the SIP grant participants. This broadened diversity definition can be referenced in *Appendix 2*.

Eight percent (8%) of nurse residents are classified as minorities, compared to 0% nurse residents one year ago (please reference *Table 1*). Although much work remains to be done to increase the diversity of Utah's nursing workforce, the trend is encouraging. In our SIP 3 grant,

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continued efforts will be directed at increasing the diversity of the nursing workforce and future trends will be closely monitored to determine progress made.

Thirty percent (30%) of Utah's nurse residents are male, compared with 9.6% nationally, according to the American Community Survey published by USA Today. In this indicator, Utah's nurse residency program well exceeds the national average. Future efforts will attempt to elicit why Utah's nursing workforce attracts more males compared to other areas nationally.

Sixty-two percent (62%) of Utah's nurse residents reside in the urban areas of the state, while 38% of the residents reside in the rural areas. U.S. Census data reveals that nine out of ten Utahans live in urban areas. Hence, in this diversity indicator, we are well exceeding the state trend by enrolling a greater percentage of rural nurses in our residency programs.

Twenty-eight percent (28%) of Utah's nurse residents are first-time college graduates while seventy-two percent (72%) of Utah's nurse residents are not first generation college graduates. Although there is not state data on this metric to make a comparison, we will continue to collect data on this metric, and monitor trends, in our SIP 3 grant.

At completion of the 24-month SIP 1 grant, all diverse nurse residents have been retained to date in the nurse residency program. In our SIP 3 grant, we plan to implement a longitudinal tracking of all nurse residents, including those with a diverse background, to determine their retention over future years.

#### *Formation of the Utah Chapter of the National Hispanic Nurses Association*

The Utah Chapter of the National Hispanic Nurses Association (NHNA) was officially created in fall 2014 with the kick-off meeting held on December 4, 2014. To date, approximately 20 individuals have become charter members of the Utah Chapter. In addition, we have a

substantial representation of Hispanic nursing students that have become members, from a variety of nursing schools across the state. These young members are adding vibrancy and energy to our Chapter. Goals for the Utah Chapter of NHNA include, but are not limited to mentorship of future Hispanic nursing students, development of a Chapter Facebook page, conducting health education and fairs for the Hispanic community, and offering nursing education opportunities to Chapter members.

As part of the mentorship role of the Chapter, members will conduct outreach to middle schools and high schools that have a high minority population. This outreach will include meeting with students and the school counselors.

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*Attendance at the Utah School Counselor's Association Conference*

As part of our efforts to increase the future pipeline of diverse nursing students, we participated in the annual Utah School Counselor's Association Conference in November 2014. Our education efforts with middle school and high school counselors focused on increasing their understanding of nursing as a professional career choice for students strong in sciences. We found in our discussion with the counselors though that many view nursing as a technical career choice for students that were not college-bound. Given that, we will step up our educational efforts with school counselors in our SIP 3 grant and focus on recruitment of a diverse body of middle and high school students interested in a potential nursing career.

**Summary and Conclusions:**

Utah has a long road ahead in increasing the gender, racial, and ethnic diversity of new nursing graduates. However, progress is being made. Website tracking of diversity trends will be ongoing by UMEC, UONL/ALC, and the nurse residency programs. By starting to track this data, visibility of this problem will be highlighted with an attendant positive impact to the nursing education programs. It is our belief that with increased attention and targeted strategic interventions will increase the diversity of the Utah nursing workforce. This will be a continued focus of work in Utah's SIP 3 grant.

**Appendix 1**

**DIVERSITY FINAL REPORT  
UTAH NURSE RESIDENCY PROGRAM  
JANUARY 2015**



**Utah Action Coalition for Health Coordinating Members  
February 19, 2015**

Name	Organization	Title	Address	Email	Telephone
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**DIVERSITY FINAL REPORT  
UTAH NURSE RESIDENCY PROGRAM  
JANUARY 2015**



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**DIVERSITY FINAL REPORT  
UTAH NURSE RESIDENCY PROGRAM  
JANUARY 2015**



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**DIVERSITY FINAL REPORT  
UTAH NURSE RESIDENCY PROGRAM  
JANUARY 2015**



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**Appendix 2**

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### **Utah Action Coalition for Health – Diversity Statement**

Increasing the diversity of the nursing workforce and supporting inclusion-oriented environments within the profession of nursing is one of the core values of UACH and is a driver for all of our statewide initiatives.

Diversity statements are increasing among organizations, universities, and professional organizations and relate to recruiting diverse students and faculty (Association of American Colleges and Universities & University of Maryland, 2001); having diversity in viewpoints, belief systems, and demographic make-up of staff, membership, and leadership (NACCHO, 2001); achieving access to health professions training programs by diverse populations (HRSA, 2000); and "...considering socioeconomic class, gender, age, religious belief, sexual orientation, and physical disabilities, as well as race and ethnicity" (AACU & UM, 2001, p. 1), (STTI, 2003).

The UACH is guided by this inclusive perspective of diversity as we act to diversify the nursing workforce in Utah.

Our working definition and operational categories for tracking diversity in the nursing workforce includes the following five categories:

1. Race
2. Ethnicity
3. Gender
4. First generation college graduates
5. Rural

Our goal is to prepare and position nurses from all of these underrepresented groups for successful careers in nursing in Utah. Ultimately, the nursing population in Utah should reflect the general population of the state and intermountain west.

In addition, we want to ensure that all nurses are well prepared to care for a diverse range of individuals and families: those reflecting different cultural backgrounds, different racial and ethnic groups, differing sexual orientations and various physical and mental limitations.

