

**Proposal to Establish A New Nursing Education Program
The Vocational Nursing Institute, Inc. in Houston, Texas
Vocational Nursing Education Program**

Summary of Request:

Consider The Vocational Nursing Institute, Inc. proposal to establish a new Vocational Nursing Education Program in Houston, Texas and the report of the survey visit (See Attachment #1). The final revised proposal was made available online to members of the Board. A notice of public hearing has been posted (See Attachment #3).

Historical Perspective:

- The Vocational Nursing Institute, Inc. (VNI) was established in May 2009 as a licensed Career School/College, currently approved by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) and the Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) to provide a Nurse Aide Program.
- The Nurse Aide Program has graduated three cohorts of students since August 2011 and each cohort achieved a 100% pass rate on the state certification examination.
- Although VNI began as a for-profit organization in 2009, the founder, Kimberley Kelly, converted the school to a non-profit status in order to better serve the community and have the opportunity to apply for grants, in addition to student tuition as its revenues.
- Ms. Kelly is the President of the eight-member Board of Directors of VNI, as well as the owner of Compliance Review Services, Inc., a compliance healthcare consulting company located in Houston, Texas. Ms. Kelly serves as the Director of the Educational Provider Unit, and has held this position with Compliance Review Services, Inc. for over 12 years. In addition, Ms. Kelly has worked as an enforcement monitor for the State of Texas for home health and hospice, works as a quality reviewer for DADS, and currently helps develop online educational offerings for registered nurses through the educational provider unit.
- Ms. Kelly began working with Board staff in December 2011 concerning the development of a proposal to establish a vocational nursing (VN) education program in the Houston area.
- A site visit was conducted on March 15, 2012 by Virginia D. Ayars, EdD, MS, RN.

Summary of Proposal:

Overview of the Proposal:

- VNI proposes to establish a new VN Education Program in Houston, Texas.
- A first cohort of 30 students is projected for a July 1, 2012 enrollment and the program proposes to admit one cohort of 30 students each year for the first three years of operation.
- The projected graduation date for the first cohort will be July 2013.
- The program is designed to be delivered through face-to-face courses in small classroom settings and faculty-supervised hands-on clinical learning experiences in a variety of healthcare facilities.
- The program can be completed in 53 weeks of full-time study; classes will be conducted from 9:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday.

- VNI has a formal articulation agreement with Lee College, Houston, Texas to accept VNI graduates as candidates for Lee College's professional nursing program. Subsequently, VNI admission requirements include completion of the following three college credit courses: Anatomy and Physiology I and II, and Microbiology. The courses may be taken at any accredited college and will be accepted with a passing grade of "C".
- The program of study is comprised of 1,452 hours, with 612 didactic hours and 840 clinical hours, to be provided throughout three semesters.
- Classes will be conducted at the VNI Houston campus with clinical experiences in healthcare facilities in Houston. A variety of clinical affiliations include Tomball Regional Hospital, Solara Hospital of Conroe, Texas Children's Pediatric Associates, as well as multiple long-term care and skilled nursing facilities.
- Currently, contracts have been secured with 11 different clinical affiliates for faculty-supervised direct patient care experiences and five agreements have been obtained to offer observational experiences to the VN students.

Rationale and Need for the Program:

- Data presented in the proposal indicate multiple clinical sites are present in the Houston area to offer students appropriate clinical learning experiences, as well as provide future employment opportunities.
- A survey of clinical facilities indicated available clinical space will accommodate and support VNI nursing students. In addition, nine directors of nursing (representing ten clinical facilities) have stated they plan to hire VNI students after graduation and licensure.
- Letters of support from community leaders in the Houston area indicate support for the proposed VN education program.

Administration and Organization:

- The TWC granted a Certificate of Approval to VNI on May 31, 2011.
- The Internal Revenue Service awarded a non-profit status to VNI on February 18, 2011.
- The school is a non-profit entity run by a Board of Directors, comprised of eight members with a variety of professional backgrounds. Ms. Kelly is the President/CEO/Owner/Chairperson of VNI. The Board of Directors has taken an active role in the development of the school. The following faculty-driven committees, with Board oversight, are in place: Safety, Marketing, Curriculum Development, Advisory, Budget, Infection Control, Admissions/Enrollment, and Student Handbook.
- The proposed director, Denise Garcia, MS, BSN, RN, is fully qualified. Ms. Garcia has been a registered nurse for over 40 years and has served as a nurse educator for six years. In addition, Ms. Garcia has an extensive background in nursing administration and quality assurance.

Availability of Faculty and Clinical Sites:

- VNI currently has eight faculty members that will be employed upon BON approval; therefore, the school is fully staffed.
- Detailed information regarding the aforementioned eight proposed faculty members is provided in the proposal.
- The Nursing Faculty Handbook provides new faculty orientation/mentoring plans and checklists.
- The Nursing Faculty Handbook describes faculty organization and functions.

- The program has received commitments for adequate clinical sites and experiences from multiple healthcare institutions in Houston, most notably Tomball Regional Hospital, Solara Hospital of Conroe, Texas Children's Pediatric Associates, Cypresswood Health and Rehabilitation, Grace Hospice of Texas, the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) Hospitals in Galveston and Huntsville, and the UTMB prison system healthcare facilities.

Financial Support and Resources:

- A letter of financial support authored by Kimberley Kelly, President of VNI, is provided in the proposal.
- Financial resources are detailed in the March 2010 independent audit provided by Reimer, McGuinness and Associates, Inc.
- The survey visit indicated that the requirements of Board Rule 214 regarding facilities, resources, and services are completely addressed, if not exceeded, in all categories.

Program of Study:

- The mission of VNI is to prepare competent vocational nurses that are knowledgeable and safe, with a caring attitude and are able to provide nursing care and/or coordinate care for clients in a variety of settings. VNI is committed to the preparation of individuals who will safely and effectively fill a beginning technical level role as a vocational nurse.
- The vision of VNI is to provide a learning environment and opportunity that will allow each student to learn and become proficient as a vocational nurse. The practice settings will include but are not limited to hospitals, nursing homes, home health agencies, clinics, and other managed care facilities.
- The curriculum is presented to cover basic core materials and build upon content to assist students to build and utilize their critical thinking and conceptualization skills, as well as technical skills via the skills lab and then actual clinical rotations.
- The VNI program is three semesters in length. The didactic portion of the program is 612 hours and the lab/clinical portion is 840 hours in length for a total of 1,452 hours. The program takes 53 weeks of full-time study to complete.
- The curriculum is established to present one content area at a time, master that area, and build upon the knowledge and skills, until the student has mastered the necessary components to pass the course.
- Significant clinical practice hours are planned throughout the program of study to promote the proficiency in skills necessary for competent nursing practice.
- The nursing curriculum is progressive or leveled. This allows for the development of values, knowledge, judgment, and skills beginning in the first courses and building throughout the program. Progressive development is demonstrated in VNI's clinical evaluation tool which is leveled to evaluate course learning outcomes throughout the curriculum.

Total Evaluation Plan:

- The program's total evaluation plan is well developed and provides measurable indicators of achievement.

Comments from Survey Visit:

Board staff met with administration, two members of the VNI Board of Directors, the proposed director of the vocational nursing program, one proposed faculty member, and school support staff. The VNI campus is located in northwest Houston in a modern, spacious building with ample parking and access to public transportation. The nursing program has a large, inviting classroom and a well-equipped nursing skills lab which is fully furnished. All equipment and supplies, including instructional resources, are well-organized and appear ready for immediate student enrollment.

Pros:

- The administration have committed the resources to the implementation of this new program.
- The campus is spacious and modern with a well-equipped skills laboratory.
- Comprehensive and diverse clinical learning experiences have been secured.
- The proposed director is qualified and experienced in prelicensure nursing education.
- Veteran prelicensure faculty members will provide the didactic and clinical instruction.

Cons:

- A letter from a Gulf Coast VN education program in opposition to the establishment of another VN education program in the Houston area was received in the Board office on March 26, 2012.

Staff Recommendation:

Move to grant initial approval to The Vocational Nursing Institute, Inc. to establish a new Vocational Nursing Education Program in Houston, Texas, to admit one cohort of 30 students each year, beginning July 1, 2012, for the first three years of operation based upon the proposal and survey visit as indicated in the attached letter (Attachment #2).

TEXAS BOARD OF NURSING

SURVEY VISIT PROGRAM REPORT - Vocational Nursing Education Programs

NAME OF NURSING PROGRAM: The Vocational Nursing Institute, Inc., Houston, Texas

DEAN OR DIRECTOR: Denise Garcia, MS, BSN, RN, Proposed Director

REASON FOR SURVEY: New Proposal DATE: March 15, 2012

SURVEY VISITOR(S): Virginia D. Ayars, EdD, MS, RN

VOLUNTARY ACCREDITATION: Texas Workforce Commission

In this report the nursing program met standards and criteria unless otherwise indicated by narrative. Narrative in the Evidence column documents findings of pertinent data, outstanding performance, or deficiencies. Narrative in the Comments column includes recommendations or requirements to be met based on analysis of the survey visit

§215.11 Facilities, Resources, and Services	Evidence	Comments
<p>(a) The controlling agency/governing institution shall be responsible for providing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) educational facilities, (2) resources, and (3) services which support the effective development and implementation of the nursing educational program. 	<p>The Vocational Nursing Institute, Inc. (VNI) campus is in northwest Houston at 11201 Steeple Park Drive. The two-story building is located near Highway 290 and Beltway 8 in the Houston area. The building contains more than 5500 square feet of recently remodeled or newly-constructed interior office space.</p> <p>There is ample parking and the school is easily accessible by public transportation. The parking lot has security measures provided.</p> <p>VNI occupies the entire free-standing two-story building, with administration offices on one hallway, one large classroom, a new state-of-the-art skills lab, a computer lab with 14 computer areas for student access, break areas inside and outside, restrooms, and an online library. The school contracted with Elsevier and Evolve to provide an extensive online library for nursing students.</p> <p>The Vocational Nursing Program Director has an office located on the second floor of the building while the School Director has an office on the first floor.</p> <p>The school has six offices dedicated to support staff and a front reception area. The lab and other offices have multiple and spacious storage areas for equipment and storage of records.</p> <p>The school has established a contractual arrangement with ComPsych to provide counseling and guidance in the areas of finance, life crisis, and career goals. The school will provide up to three counseling sessions per student. In addition, the school has retained a qualified school counselor who worked at Cy Fair ISD as a guidance counselor, and who is willing to consult with the school.</p>	<p>Criterion met.</p>

§215.11 Facilities, Resources, and Services	Evidence	Comments
<p>(b) An appropriately equipped skills laboratory shall be provided to accommodate maximum number of students allowed for the program.</p> <p>(1) the laboratory shall be equipped with hot and cold running water.</p> <p>(2) The laboratory shall have adequate storage for equipment.</p>	<p>The spacious skills laboratory has four beds, four adult mannequins, and three infant mannequins. In addition, "Choking Charlie" will be utilized in teaching proper techniques of the Heimlich maneuver.</p> <p>Hot and cold running water is present in the skills lab.</p> <p>Ample storage space exists for equipment and supplies.</p>	<p>Criterion met.</p>
<p>(c) The dean/director and faculty shall have adequate secretarial and clerical assistance to meet the needs of the program.</p>	<p>One full-time and two part-time administrative assistants will provide secretarial and clerical assistance for the nursing program.</p>	<p>Criterion met.</p>
<p>(d) The physical facilities shall be adequate to meet the needs of the program in relation to the size of the faculty and the student body.</p> <p>(1) The dean/director shall have a private office.</p> <p>(2) Faculty offices shall be conveniently located and adequate in number and size to provide faculty with privacy for conferences with students and uninterrupted work.</p> <p>(3) Space for clerical staff, records, files, and equipment shall be adequate.</p> <p>(4) There shall be mechanisms which provide for the security of sensitive materials, such as examinations and health records.</p> <p>(5) Classrooms, laboratories, and conference rooms shall be conducive to learning and adequate in number, size, and type for the number of students and the educational purposes for which the rooms are used.</p> <p>(6) Teaching aids shall be provided to meet the objectives/outcomes of the program.</p> <p>(7) Adequate restrooms and lounges shall be provided convenient to the classroom.</p>	<p>The director of the nursing program has a private office on the second floor. Faculty offices should accommodate the needs of faculty members. There are multiple conference rooms available in the building where faculty may meet privately with students.</p> <p>Records will be properly maintained in locked files in secured areas of the building.</p> <p>The large classroom provides ample space for student learning. Audio-visual aids are appropriate. All equipment and resources are extremely well-organized.</p> <p>Thirteen large three-ring binders contain all course syllabi, hand-outs, and references. All information is also available electronically.</p> <p>Restrooms offer five ADA-accessible stalls for both men and women, with minimum clearance requirements at or exceeding ADA guidelines. The lounges are ADA compliant.</p>	<p>Criterion met.</p>

§215.11 Facilities, Resources, and Services	Evidence	Comments
<p>(e) The learning resources, library, and departmental holdings shall be current, use contemporary technology appropriate for the level of the curriculum, and be sufficient for the size of the student body and the needs of the faculty.</p> <p>(1) Provisions shall be made for accessibility, availability, and timely delivery of information resources.</p> <p>(2) Facilities and policies shall promote effective use, i.e. environment, accessibility, and hours of operation.</p>	<p>VNI has contracted through Elsevier to offer access to Mosby's Nursing Consult. This includes reference books, patient education resources, nursing news and updates, clinical practice information, nursing journals, drug information, and Medline.</p> <p>Online access to library services and online databases allows students to access most reference and research materials and services from their personal computer or from computers available in the school library or classroom. The online library is available 24 hours a day. The entire campus is wireless.</p> <p>Well-developed, comprehensive policies and procedures have been established and were reviewed during the survey visit.</p> <p>VNI adheres to all Americans with Disability Act (ADA) requirements, all local building code regulations, and the Texas Accessibility Standards.</p>	<p>Criterion met.</p>
§215.12 Records and Reports		
<p>(a) Accurate and current records shall be maintained for a minimum of two years in a confidential manner and be accessible to appropriate parties, including Board representatives. These records shall include, but are not limited to:</p> <p>(1) records of current students;</p> <p>(2) faculty records;</p> <p>(3) administrative records, which include minutes of faculty meetings for the past three years, and school catalogs;</p> <p>(4) the current program of study and curriculum including mission and goals (philosophy and outcomes), and course outlines;</p> <p>(5) agreements with affiliating agencies; and</p> <p>(6) the master plan of evaluation with most recent data collection.</p>	<p>VNI has implemented a record retention policy that meets the Texas state law.</p> <p>Records of enrolled students will be maintained onsite. These records will be subject to privacy protections under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) rules. Student records that will be maintained onsite will remain in locked fireproof cabinets in a secure room. Keys for access to the records are limited to the school director, the nursing program director, and a designated administrative assistant.</p>	<p>Criterion met.</p>
<p>(b) Record forms may be developed by an individual school.</p>	<p>Forms have been developed to be specific to VNI.</p>	<p>Criterion met.</p>
<p>(c) Hospital employment forms are not to be used for student records.</p>	<p>The topic was addressed during the survey visit and no hospital employment forms will be utilized for student records.</p>	<p>Criterion met.</p>
<p>(d) Records shall be safely stored to prevent loss, destruction, or unauthorized use.</p>	<p>Measures are in place to ensure that records will be safely and properly secured.</p>	<p>Criterion met.</p>

<< DRAFT >>

April 23, 2012

Denise Garcia, MS, BSN, RN, Director
Vocational Nursing Education Program
The Vocational Nursing Institute, Inc.
11201 Steeple Park Drive
Houston, TX 77065

Dear Ms. Garcia:

At the April 19-20, 2012 meeting, members of the Texas Board of Nursing discussed The Vocational Nursing Institute, Inc. Proposal to Establish a New Vocational Nursing Education Program in Houston, Texas, and the report of the March 15, 2012 survey visit. The members of the Board wish to thank Ms. Kimberley Kelly and you for being present to answer questions.

As indicated by the enclosed order, it was the Board's decision to grant initial approval status to The Vocational Nursing Institute, Inc. in Houston, Texas, and allow the admission of an initial cohort of 30 students in July 2012 with subsequent enrollments to be one cohort per year of 30 students each cohort for the next three years.

In addition, the Board issued the following recommendation:

It is recommended that the director and faculty become involved with the Texas Association of Vocational Nurse Educators (TAVNE) and consider this activity as part of the faculty development plan in vocational nursing education instruction. The program director shall provide documentation of TAVNE membership to Board staff by October 1, 2012.

A recommendation is a suggestion based upon program assessment indirectly related to the rules to which the program must respond but in a method of their choosing.

We wish you success with the program. If you have questions, or if we may provide assistance, please contact Board staff at 512-305-7660.

Sincerely,

Kristin K. Benton, MSN, RN
President of the Board

Virginia D. Ayars, EdD, MS, RN
Nursing Consultant for Education

copy: Texas Workforce Commission

Texas Board of Nursing
333 Guadalupe Street, Suite 3-460
Austin, Texas 78701-3942

BEFORE THE BOARD OF NURSING
IN AND FOR THE STATE OF TEXAS

In the matter of the proposal of The Vocational Nursing Institute, Inc., Houston, Texas

For approval to implement a Vocational Nursing Education Program

ORDER OF THE BOARD

TO:

The Board of Nursing in and for the State of Texas in a regularly scheduled meeting, held on the 19th day of April 2012, considered the proposal for authority to implement a Vocational Nursing Education Program and obtain Approval from the Board, pursuant to Section 301.157, Texas Occupations Code.

At the meeting, Kristin K. Benton, MSN, RN, President of the Board, presided and the following members were present:

Deborah Hughes Bell, CLU, ChFC, Consumer Member
Patricia Clapp, BA, Consumer Member
Tamara Cowen, MN, RN, Representing Practice
Marilyn J. Davis, RN, BSN, MPA, Representing Practice
Richard Robert Gibbs, LVN, Representing Practice
Kathy Leader-Horn, LVN, Representing Practice
Mary LeBeck, MSN, RN, Representing ADN Programs
Josefina Lujan, PhD, RN, Representing BSN Programs
Beverly Jean Nutall, LVN, Representing Practice
Mary Jane Salgado, MEd, Consumer Member
Verna Kathleen Shipp, MSN, RN, FNP, Representing Advanced Practice

The Board reviewed the proposal of the above school and after having discussed the proposal in an open public meeting, the Board makes the following findings:

FINDINGS

1. That a written proposal has been filed with said Board.
2. That a public meeting on said proposal was held to take testimony and evidence by the Board.
3. That the written proposal does meet the minimum requirements for proceeding with the development of an approved program offering a certificate in Vocational Nursing.

ORDER

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED THAT, the proposal of The Vocational Nursing Institute, Inc. is approved having been found to comply with minimum requirements for establishing a Vocational Nursing Education Program to prepare vocational nurses.

The program is authorized to admit an initial cohort of 30 students in July 2012 and admit one cohort of 30 students per year for the next three years.

DATED THIS 23rd day of April, 2012.

THE BOARD OF NURSING IN AND
FOR THE STATE OF TEXAS

Seal

By: _____
Kristin K. Benton, MSN, RN
President

BOARD OF NURSING FOR THE STATE OF TEXAS

333 Guadalupe Street, Suite 3-460

Austin, Texas 78701-3942

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

for

Consideration of a Proposal from The Vocational Nursing Institute, Inc.

To Establish A

Vocational Nursing Education Program

in Houston, Texas

Date and Time: April 19, 2012 at 2:20 PM

Place: Hobby Building

333 Guadalupe Street

Tower 2, Room 225

Austin, Texas

The Board will hear testimony from individuals who wish to present information concerning the proposal.

Written testimony will also be considered and should be received in the Board's office by April 7, 2012.

Address written testimony to:

Katherine Thomas, MN, RN, FAAN, Executive Director

Texas Board of Nursing

333 Guadalupe Street, Suite 3-460

Austin, Texas 78701-3942