

**Report of a Routine Survey Visit  
Valley Baptist Medical Center in Harlingen, Texas  
Vocational Nursing Education Program**

**Summary of Request**

Consider the report of the May 17, 2013, routine survey visit to the Valley Baptist Medical Center in Harlingen, Texas Vocational Nursing Education Program. The survey visit was conducted by Beverly Skloss, MSN, RN, Board Program Evaluator. A previous survey visit was conducted in July 2002.

**Historical Perspective:**

- Valley Baptist Medical Center (VBMC) was established in 1925 as Harlingen Hospital. The name was changed to VBMC in 1945 when the Baptist General Convention of Texas acquired the hospital.
- The VBMC Vocational Nursing (VN) Education Program began in 1957.
- The school is located on the campus of VBMC in the Boggus Education Pavilion.
- The Pavilion contains the Breedlove Nurse Education Center, the Raimond Library, and the Thomas R. and Betty M. McKibbens Clinical Pastoral Education Center.
- The VBMC VN Education Program is located in the Breedlove Nurse Education Center, named for the founder of the hospital's volunteer auxiliary.
- The program is designated a non-profit organization, approved and regulated by the Texas Workforce Commission, Career Schools and Colleges, Austin, Texas.

The NCLEX-PN® pass rates for the past five (5) years are provided in the following table:

Examination Year	NCLEX-PN® Examination Pass Rate	Number of First Time Candidates (Passed/Total)	BON Approval Status
2012	85.71%	24/28	Full
2011	97.30%	36/37	Full
2010	96.97%	32/33	Full
2009	96.97%	32/33	Full
2008	92.86%	39/42	Full

- Janis Baker, RN, BSN, was appointed director of the VN program in August 2012. Ms. Baker served as a faculty member and the program's lead instructor from 1998 through July 2012.
- Ms. Baker is responsible for the VN program and has teaching duties.
- Five (5) full-time faculty members teach in the VN program and two (2) adjunct faculty members are utilized as needed.
- The program admits one (1) cohort every January with the number varying, depending upon the number of qualified applicants.

**Summary of Survey Findings:**

- Board Program Evaluator identified many strengths in the program.
- Findings from the survey visit indicate the program is in full compliance with Board Rule 214 (See Attachment #1).

**Pros and Cons from Survey Visit:****Pros:**

- The VN Program Director is an experienced nurse educator and stated she is supported by administration, faculty, and students. Ms. Baker indicated that she has adequate time to fulfill the director responsibilities, although she carries a teaching load.
- Administration expressed strong support for the VN program and stated that the nursing program adds value to VBMC and fulfills a continued need for nurses in the community.
- Faculty members appear to be a cohesive, dedicated group that voiced high satisfaction with their roles.
- Students interviewed expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the program and they believe faculty members are committed to their success.
- The majority of VN students stated that they plan to further their education to become registered nurses.
- The curriculum is developed according to Board rules and the *Differentiated Essential Competencies (DECs) (2010)* objectives.
- The program of study incorporates creative methods for course delivery, including frequent communication with faculty, face-to-face instruction, student centered learning activities, computer based learning activities, and utilization of low fidelity simulation.
- Clinical learning experiences are faculty supervised, with direct-patient care in hands-on clinical settings.
  - Preceptors employed by VBMC are utilized in the program and clear communication between preceptors and faculty members is evident.
  - The program utilizes simulation activities to prepare students for clinical practice.
- The program has four (4) active contracts with clinical affiliating agencies with the majority of clinical learning experiences being in VBMC, offering in-patient and out-patient services to clients across the life span.
  - Clinical learning experiences are readily available in acute and non-acute settings.
- Professional development for the director and faculty members are more than adequate with all attending the Texas Association of Vocational Nurse Educator annual conference. The VBMC also offers a variety of educational opportunities on-site.
  - The University of Texas at San Antonio Regional Academic Health Center (RAHC) is affiliated with Valley Baptist Health System and within walking distance of the VN program campus. The RAHC Library and computer resources are available to students and faculty, free of charge.

**Cons:**

- The program administrative assistant has other assigned responsibilities at VBMC, with limited time to provide adequate clerical/secretarial support to the director and faculty.

**Staff Recommendation:**

Move to accept the report of findings of the routine survey visit to the Valley Baptist Medical Center in Harlingen, Texas Vocational Nursing Education Program (See draft letter in Attachment #2).

**Summary of Survey Visit  
Valley Baptist Medical Center in Harlingen, Texas  
Vocational Nursing Education Program**

**Purpose of Survey visit:** Routine six (6) year survey visit

**Date of Visit:** May 17, 2013

**Program Evaluator Conducting Visit:** Beverly Skloss, MSN, RN, Contracted Program Evaluator

**Program Evaluator met with:**

Randall Baker, MBA, Executive Vice-President  
Stephen Hill, BSN, MBA, RN, Vice President & Chief Nursing Officer  
Patricia Palomo, MSN, RN, Director of Nursing Education  
Janis Baker, BSN, RN, Vocational Nursing (VN) Education Program Director  
Erin Hahs, BSN, RN, Lead Instructor  
Adrienne Reyes, BSN, RN, Student Development & Instructor  
Joe Uribe, BSN, RN, Instructor  
Albert Azua, RN, Instructor  
Frank Gonzales, BS, RN, Instructor  
Stephanie Hamby, Project Coordinator  
Three (3) VN Student Representatives

**Activities carried out by Program Evaluator during survey visit:**

- conducted initial conference with director and administration;
- met with faculty and staff;
- interviewed fourteen (14) VN students;
- reviewed the curriculum and all syllabi;
- reviewed the Student Handbook and Faculty Handbook;
- reviewed exams and clinical evaluation tools;
- toured campus and facilities housing the nursing program;
- reviewed records and documents, including: student and faculty files, minutes of faculty meetings, and the Total Program Evaluation (TPE) Plan; and
- conducted exit interview with director, faculty, and administration.

**Summary of Findings:**

Administration:

- Administration indicated the nursing program adds value to VBMC and fulfills a need in the local community.
  - The VN program is associated with the Department of Nursing Education in the VBMC.
  - Janis Baker, BSN, RN, VN Program Director, has served as the director of the VN program since August 2012.
  - Ms. Baker previously served as a faculty member and the lead instructor in the VN program.
  - Ms. Baker reported that she is comfortable fulfilling her program director duties, as well as carrying a teaching load, since she had fourteen (14) years of experience as a faculty member in the VN program prior to her appointment as director and because of supportive, dedicated faculty members.
  - Clear channels of communication between the director and administration were evident.
  - According to the Vice President for Nursing and the VN Program Director, VN graduates are able to obtain employment at VBMC and other clinical agencies in the community.
  - The program has limited accounting personnel support to provide daily and monthly financial
- Program of Study:
- The eleven (11) month program of study is provided in three (3) levels.

- The program is comprised of a total of 1494.75 clock hours: 598 didactic hours and 896.75 clinical hours (including skills lab, simulation, and direct patient care).
- The program of study is well-organized and includes all Board required content.
- The curriculum is designed to ensure students are competent prior to entering the clinical setting. Nursing skills are taught during the first level, ranging from simple to complex.
- *The Differentiated Essential Competencies (DECS) (2010)* have been fully incorporated into the curriculum.
- Standardized testing is used throughout the program for admission, progression, remediation, and graduation purposes.
- Evaluation methods and tools to measure progression are according to Board Rule 214.9 and Board Education Guideline 3.7.3.a.
- No online delivery of didactic content is provided.

#### Faculty:

- Five (5) full-time RN faculty provide the majority of the VN instruction. In addition, the program director carries a reduced teaching load.
- Two (2) adjunct faculty members provide instruction on an as-needed basis.
- Faculty meet Board qualifications and offer a rich diversity in their education and clinical backgrounds.
- The newest faculty has seventeen (17) years of teaching experience and is being mentored during his first year.
- Faculty reported they receive strong support from one another and the administration.
- Faculty members report they are engaged in curriculum planning, implementation, and evaluation.
- The faculty have regular meetings and decision making is collaborative.
- Review of faculty meeting minutes reveals that documentation regarding faculty actions and rationale were consistently evident.
- The Faculty Handbook includes written policies as required.
- The program director and faculty report a generous faculty development program that meets their needs
- Faculty files provide evidence of faculty qualifications, responsibilities, and faculty evaluations.

#### Students:

- The program admits one (1) cohort of students each year in January.
- The program has retained 39 of the 49 students admitted in the January 2013 cohort.
- Students reported they enrolled in the VN program because of the program's excellent reputation.
- Students agreed the program of study is preparing them well for clinical practice and they cited clinical learning experiences as being the most rewarding part of the program.
- All students reported they plan on continuing their education to become registered nurses.
- The Test of Essential Academic Skills (TEAS) is utilized for pre-admission testing.
- Student policies are well-defined and written.

#### Clinical Learning Experiences:

- The program has four (4) active clinical contracts with affiliating agencies that provide rich learning opportunities with most of the experiences obtained at the VBMC in-patient and out-patient departments. Skills lab and simulation lab activities are also utilized.
- Faculty provide supervision during all clinical learning experiences and maintain appropriate ratios.
- Clinical learning experiences are scheduled to correlate with didactic content.
- Criteria for selecting clinical agencies are well-defined in writing.
- The clinical evaluation tools are based upon course content, the DECS and measure progression of the student throughout the program. Student expectations are written in rubric format, designed to be easily understandable for students with patient safety as an identified priority.
- The skills/simulation labs are available to students for practice with faculty supervision.
- Clinical preceptors are used and preceptor guidelines are well-written.

#### Facilities, Resources, and Services:

- A full array of student services are offered on the school campus and surrounding facilities.
- An ample library, computer resources, and student success counseling are evident. There is a computer lab with twenty (20) computers available in the Boggus Education Pavilion.
- Students and faculty have access to the University of Texas Health Science Center- San Antonio Regional Academic Health Center (RAHC) library located within walking distance, across street from the VBMC.
- Computers are also available at the RAHC for student use.
- There is ample, open parking adjacent to the VN program building.
- The facilities housing the VN program are spacious and equipped with numerous classrooms, a well-equipped skills/simulation lab, and a student lounge.
- Audio visual equipment is available for every classroom.
- The program director and full-time faculty members are provided with fully furnished private offices.
- The program has clerical and secretarial support; however, this individual has other responsibilities at VBMC that limits the time spent providing support to the VN program.
- The program director and faculty members identified the need for information technology support to upgrade computers in the computer lab.

#### Records and Reports:

- The program has a TPE Plan that is used for decision-making. The previously completed TPE is in compliance with Board requirements.
- Meeting minutes indicated when decisions are made and are prepared in a legible format.
- Student and faculty files contain all documents required by Board Rule 214.
- Clinical affiliation agreements are current and easily accessible.
- File storage meets Board Rule 214 requirements.

**DRAFT LETTER**

October 21, 2013

Janis Baker, BSN, RN, Director  
Vocational Nursing Education Program  
Valley Baptist Medical Center  
P. O. Drawer 2588  
Harlingen, Texas 78551

Dear Ms. Baker,

At the October 17-18, 2013 meeting, the members of the Texas Board of Nursing considered the report of the routine survey visit to the Valley Baptist Medical Center in Harlingen, Texas Vocational Nursing Education Program. The program was found to be in compliance with all aspects of Rule 214. Therefore, it was the decision of the Board to accept the report of the survey visit.

If you have questions, or if we may offer assistance, please contact Board Staff at [Virginia.ayars@bon.texas.gov](mailto:Virginia.ayars@bon.texas.gov) or 512-305-7660.

Sincerely,

Kathy Shipp, MSN, RN, FNP  
President of the Board

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

Copy: Stephen Hill, BSN, MBA, RN, Chief Nursing Officer, Valley Baptist Medical Center  
Texas Workforce Commission