

Objectives and Needs

1. Centrality to or enhancement of the institution's approved mission and institutional objectives

The University of Montana-Missoula College of Technology's Health Professions Department Nursing Program is central to the ongoing mission of the College in preparing individuals to perform well in the professional field of nursing. This educational effort, in concert with area health care organizations, provides a vital partnership in building community, improving lives, improving economies, and preparing a highly qualified professional cadre of nurses to serve area residents.

This proposal reflects the natural progression, transformation, and evolution of health care and education in the 21st century. Seamless educational paths for nurses are just now emerging in Montana. Multiple exit points have not been available, to this extent, in Montana. This program, which allows individuals to exit as a CNA, Licensed Practical Nurse candidate, or Registered Nurse candidate then continue into a BSN program, serves students, hospitals, clinics, long-term care facilities, and home health agencies in which they work.

Description of the program: To better serve the interests and needs of students, hospitals, clinics and other health care groups, The University of Montana-Missoula College of Technology seeks approval from the Montana Regents of Higher Education to convert the currently approved Associate of Applied Science program in Practical Nursing to a Certificate program in Practical Nursing. In concert with this request the College seeks approval to offer an Associate of Science degree leading to licensure as a Registered Nurse, which is a new program at The University of Montana-Missoula College of Technology.

The goal of this proposal is to increase access to Registered Nurse education by offering a seamless and progressive educational option for students to earn their CNA/PN certification first and then move forward to RN certification. It will take two years to completely transition from the existing AAS program to the innovative new CNA/PN/RN model. This transition will be accomplished, as are all of our allied health programs, in complete coordination and cooperation with our health care industry partners and other educational units that share the clinical sites.

The successful graduate of the Practical Nursing Certificate program will be eligible to sit for the national licensure examination, NCLEXPN. Admissions requirements for the Registered Nurse program will include holding a current unencumbered license as a licensed practical nurse. Coursework taken at the practical nurse level will articulate with courses at the registered nurse level. Courses for both programs have been organized to enable a student or graduate from another practical nursing program to articulate laterally or vertically.

a. goals and objectives

The goal of the UM-MCOT CNA/PN/RN Program (with BSN articulation) is to establish a seamless educational program for nursing professionals that meets individual, professional, hospital, and other health professional needs in the UM-MCOT area. Objectives include:

- (1) To provide entry level core curriculum that provides students with the best opportunity for success and self-assessment and exit as a CNA if a student's circumstances require this.
- (2) To provide practical nurse education that prepares students to sit for and pass the PN licensing exam.
- (3) To provide advanced nurse education that prepares students to sit for and pass the RN licensing exam.

b. intellectual basis for the curriculum

The UM-MCOT nursing curriculum leading to a CNA/PN/RN licensure preparation is a very demanding and rigorous program of study based in high expectations of The University of Montana and the faculty responsible for its implementation. The curriculum standards are set forth by the Montana Board of Nursing, the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, National League of Nurses and the American Association of Colleges of Nursing guidelines for the essentials of nursing education. All courses are approved through the UM-M Faculty Senate's academic review process.

c. course of study

Completion of the pre-health core of courses qualifies a student to apply for entry into the Practical Nursing program. Applicants must have a 2.75 cumulative GPA (CGPA), and at least a C in every class, except SCN 119N, which requires a B. Twenty applicants who have met all the prerequisites, have met or exceeded the required CGPA, and who have a personal interview with the admissions committee will be offered acceptance in the practical nursing program. Applicants must prove computer literacy before admission, either by taking CRT 101 Introduction to Computers or successfully passing a challenge examination. Entrance to the practical nursing program is spring and fall semesters.

Applicants who successfully complete the pre-health core and Practical Nursing program, hold and maintain a current unencumbered license as an LPN, provide 2 letters of recommendation, and attend a personal

interview to apply for the ASRN program are admitted to the Registered Nurse Program. Ten applicants, who have met all the prerequisites and have met or exceeded the required CGPA, will be accepted. Minimum acceptable CGPA is 2.75. If the number of accepted applicants exceeds openings available, applicants will be placed on a list and will be offered openings if they become available. Entry to the ASRN program is spring and fall semesters.

Program of study: **UM-MCOT Pre-Health Core to CNA to PN to RN to BSN Transfer Program**

AA Degree Core- Prerequisite to entering the Practical Nursing Program

SCN 119N Anatomy and Physiology w/lab	7	
MAT 117 Linear and Probability (Required for ASRN)	3	
-or-		
MAT 100 Intermediate College Algebra (plcmt exam)	3	
COM 101 English Composition (plcmt exam)	3	
SCN 150N Nutrition	<u>3</u>	
Total		16

Practical Nursing --

NUR 195 Introduction to Nursing	3	
PSY 100S Introduction to Psychology	4	
NUR 154 Pharmacology	3	
NUR 155 Adult Physiological Needs I	4	
NUR 151 Drug Administration and Calculation	<u>3</u>	
Total		17

NUR 269 Nursing Trends and Issues	3	
NUR 255 Adult Physiological Needs II	4	
NUR 160 Childbearing Family Needs	<u>3</u>	
Total		<u>10</u>
Total to complete Practical Nursing Program		43

Associate of Science Registered Nurse Program

CHEM 152 Organic and Biological Chemistry w/ lab	4	
SCN 220N Human Physiology w/ lab	4	
NUR 195 Current Issues in Professional Practice	2	
PSY 185 Human Development Across the Life Span	3	
NUR 195 Mental Health Nursing Needs	<u>2</u>	
Total		15

COM 150S Interpersonal Communications	3	
BIOL 106 Elementary Medical Microbiology	3	
NUR 195 Advanced Obstetrics and Pediatrics	3	
NUR 195 Management, Ethics and Internship	2	
NUR 195 Advanced Adult Physiological Needs	<u>3</u>	
Total		<u>14</u>

Total to complete AS for RN 72

d. prospective instructional methods or delivery by telecommunications

No web-based telecommunications will be used in the teaching of the program. No off campus delivery using web-based telecommunications will be used in the program.

2. Need for program.

a. student interest or demand; with data on enrollment trends, outreach interest

The UM-MCOT presently has a 3-year waiting list for the nursing program. This trend has persisted for over five years while demand in local hospitals continues to fuel student interest and applications. Based on Montana Department of Labor statistics, Montana (and the nation) expects to see a faster than average state-wide growth in nursing positions by 2010. The U.S. Dept. of Labor names nursing as one of the 10 top areas for new jobs. Unmet need exists for new and working professionals wishing to attain better positions and pay as RNs. With

pathologic changes and psychosocial variations of the patient in the clinical setting. Differential nursing diagnosis and treatment of more complex pathological conditions of the adult will also be explored.

***NUR 195 Management, Ethics and Internship* 2 credits**

This course focuses on the principles of professional nursing management, leadership and ethics. Students develop knowledge and skills in decision making as well as in the management areas of planning, organizing, staffing, directing and controlling. Emphasis is on the use of leadership knowledge and skills in affecting change. It will integrate knowledge of ethical factors as they relate to health and illness.

***NUR 195 Advanced Obstetrics and Pediatrics* 3 credits**

This course presents concepts and principles related to the registered nurse providing nursing care for childbearing families and children who are experiencing common and complex alterations in the functional dimensions of health. Clinical focus is on the use of the nursing process in assessment and application of advanced concepts in the care of the child-bearing family and or child with more complex health care problems from birth through adolescence. The course will explore special needs and complications during the perinatal experience and altered functioning, special needs, and disease processes manifested in children.

***NUR 195 Introduction to Nursing* 3 credits**

The course introduces the student to concepts in health care and the basic skills for patient care. Basic nursing procedures are practiced in the on-campus laboratory. A supervised clinical component in a long term care setting is included. Successful completion of the course meets the requirements for CAN certification in the State of Montana.

***NUR 160 Childbearing Family Needs* 3 credits**

The lecture portion of this course emphasized meeting basic human needs of the family throughout the childbearing years. This includes the basic needs of the pregnant woman as well as those of the child from infancy through adolescence. Emphasis is on increased development of nursing competencies in the areas of the nursing process, communication, normal growth and development, cultural diversity, ethical-legal issues and professional behavior. The clinical portion provides supervised learning experiences providing nursing care to the childbearing family.

***SCN 220 Human Physiology* 4 credits**

Human Physiology is intended for students in the Associate of Science Registered Nurse program at the College of Technology. It is an extension of SCN 119, Anatomy and Physiology. The course and its accompanying laboratory provide more in-depth exploration of principles and clinical consequences of the physiology of selected human organ systems. Building upon basic concepts learned in Anatomy and Physiology, students will study muscular function, musculo-skeletal integration, neural physiology, nervous system integration, endocrine and central nervous system function and coordination, circulatory, respiratory, renal, and reproductive physiology.

Adequacy, Accreditation and Assessment Issues

1. Adequacy of present faculty, facilities, equipment, and library holdings.

The AAS Practical Nursing program currently has three full time tenure track positions, one half time faculty and three adjunct faculty. With the introduction of the registered nursing program, there will be a need for Master's in nursing-prepared faculty to augment the present faculty. Some of the current adjunct faculty could fill that need if they were enrolled in a Master's Nursing program. One of the current full time faculty and three adjuncts are doing that at present and two tenured faculty are already Masters prepared.

2. If special accreditation will be sought, timetable and costs...

Assuming the first class of registered nursing students graduates in May of 2006, the program would be eligible to apply for external accreditation from the National League of Nursing (NLN) and would have the required site visit during fiscal year 2007. The cost for that site visit is approximately 10,000. If The University of Montana--Helena College of Technology proposal for a registered nursing program visit and UM-MCOT accreditation visit takes place at this same time, it is possible that a shared cost could be negotiated with the NLN. Based on initial approval of a new program, there is a revisit scheduled in five years with interim written reports required.

Continuing accreditation by NLN requires payment of an annual fee of approximately 2000.

Accreditation by NLN is mandatory for registered nursing programs. If a graduate seeks advanced education, at the baccalaureate level or higher, he/she must have graduated from an accredited program at the entry level.

Because the registered nurse program builds on the practical nursing foundation, the practical nursing program will need to be accredited also.

3. Assessment plan: how the program will "fit" within the institution's internal, approved assessment process ...

a. entry level preparedness (i.e., competency and skills) and predicted success of students--collection of baseline data

The UM-MCOT CAN/PN/RN program supports the philosophy of providing students with multiple exit opportunities that will match student strengths with program direction. The Health Care Core program, COMPASE assessment, the PN program, and GPA requirements all combine to prepare students to succeed in the Nursing Program. This approach maximizes student success, program slots, clinical assignments, faculty productivity, cost effectiveness, and student retention and graduation rates.

b. intermediate assessment of student performance by quantitative and qualitative measures

Intermediate assessment is done in a longitudinal way with every course, every experience, every exposure to the nursing experience. Additionally, success in the health core, PN certification and clinical assignments further the ongoing communication of learning successes and needs with students as they progress in the program.

c. end-of-instruction assessment

As is the case with all of our health care areas, students must pass licensing requirements. The program's graduates have, over the years, enjoyed a success rate of over 90% of students passing the licensure exams.

d. student/alumni satisfaction

Although we do not have a formal alumni coordination effort in force, the satisfaction of our graduates has been very high. This is not a surprise when one considers that we are, in a short period of time, providing them with the career skills and the knowledge that have given them increased personal efficiency, a way and means to remain in Montana, and a future for their families. Students are part of our advisory group and many times become mentors of new students in various health care facilities.

e. employer satisfaction; and

Our nursing program fosters strong relationships between health care partners and the clinical students we are cooperatively training and our graduates who staff their facilities. Letters of support are included in the appendix.

f. program review.

Prospective students desiring to enter the practical nursing program must complete a writing and mathematics placement test required by College policies. Consistent with Board of Nursing rules, the applicant must provide proof of successful completion of high school or equivalency. Nursing-specific testing will also be required utilizing a national standardized test. At the completion of the first semester of general education coursework, the 20 students with a GPA of 2.75 or higher will be accepted into the nursing portion of the program.

Prospective students desiring entry into the registered nursing program will be required to possess and maintain a current unencumbered license as a practical nurse in Montana. They must have completed the general education courses listed in the scope and sequence of the practical nursing program. Practical nursing courses will be accepted as a block. There will be 10 students accepted each fall and spring semester and acceptance will begin with a CGPA of 2.75. They will also be required to provide two letters of recommendation from current or past employers or nursing instructors. A departmental admission screening committee will review the applicants' transcripts and letters and conduct interviews of applicants to determine program acceptance. Intermediate and ongoing assessment in the practical and registered nursing programs will include written examinations with an acceptable passing course grade being 80 percent or higher. Use of standardized national competency examinations will supplement teacher-constructed examinations. Written evaluations of psychomotor skill development is a component of successful course completion. Both didactic and clinical components must be satisfactorily completed in order to matriculate and graduate.

At the end of their final semester in either the practical or registered nursing program, students take a mock licensure examination to assist them in preparing for the NCLEX, the national licensing exam for all nurses. If students perform poorly on the mock exam, they are individually counseled regarding a plan to help them be successful. The final outcome assessment criterion is passing the NCLEX, either as a registered or practical nurse. The current practical nursing program has had 92-100% passing rates in the past five years.

Employers and graduates are surveyed by the career services office at the College yearly. Clinical instructors are in the areas where graduates are employed, and hear first hand when problems arise. These onsite conversations with professional nurses in regard to programmatic and curricular changes are used to make revisions. There is an advisory committee to the program comprised of employers of nurses. Their input is valued also to maintain program focus on current practice setting expectations. The Montana Board of Nursing maintains standards for nursing education programs and revisions are made to comply with those Board Rules. Program review is mandated by both the Board of Nursing and by The University of Montana--Missoula. If the program is accredited by the National League of Nursing, a third review process is also mandated. Annual review by the Board of Nursing is one of the rules based on statutory requirements. As previously stated, NLN requires accreditation site visits at least once every five years. The Board of Nursing coordinates their site visit schedule with that of NLN, so programs are visited by two approving/accrediting bodies every five years. The University of Montana--Missoula is visited by Northwest Associate of Schools and Colleges also on a scheduled basis. The College of Technology and programs therein are reviewed at that time.

Impact on Faculty, Facilities, Costs, Students, and Other Departments and Campuses

1. Additional faculty requirements

a. names and qualifications

Full time Faculty:

Karen Hill, RN, MA, Doctoral Candidate, Department Chair
Margaret Wafstet, RN, MSN Half time Director; Half time Instructor, 9 Cr. Hr.
Michelle Sare-Conn, RN, MSN Candidate Full time instructor, 18 Cr Hr
Mary Nielsen, RN, MSN Full time instructor, 18 Cr Hr.

Adjunct Faculty:

Chery Richards, RN, BSN, Masters Candidate .14 FTE
Cindy Condin, RN, MSN Candidate .44 FTE
Diane Haker RN, BSN, BA .10 FTE
LeAnne Oglesby, RN, BSM, Masters Candidate .30 FTE

b. faculty recruitment

The UM-MCOT is fortunate in that in the Missoula metropolitan area we have been able to attract a high quality faculty that meets and exceed the qualifications required. We are, however, constantly faced with the problem that salaries are not competitive especially when graduates are hired quickly at top salaries in the health field.

c. profile of regular faculty to be hired full-time or part-time

The Board of Nursing rules state that a program director must hold a Masters Degree in Nursing, be licensed as an RN in Montana, have a minimum of two years of experience in nursing practice, and a minimum of two years in nursing education. The Board also requires that the director of an approved registered nursing program be a full-time program administrator. The current practical nursing director holds all required Montana State Board credentials and has an academic year contract that includes a teaching assignment of 0.5 FTE. Responding to Board requirements, the contract must change to 12 months with only program administration required. Faculty staffing requirements are identified below. The proposal does not require hiring new tenure line faculty.

- FY 05, Fall Semester 2004: Current faculty staffing pattern adequate--2 full-time, 1 half-time, and 3 adjunct faculty.
- FY 05, Spring Semester 2005: Required faculty staffing--2 full-time (current), 3 adjunct faculty.
- FY 05, Summer Semester 2005: Required faculty staffing--1 full-time (current) and 1 half-time faculty. [A baccalaureate prepared adjunct faculty is appropriate for the half-time schedule.]
- FY 06, Fall Semester 2005 and Spring Semester 2006: Required faculty staffing--2 full-time faculty (current) [credential requirements—baccalaureate; masters Medical-Surgical nursing] and 3 adjunct faculty [credential requirements—baccalaureate, masters in mental health nursing, masters in obstetrics and pediatrics.]
- FY06, Summer Semester 2006: Required faculty staffing--2 full-time (current) and 1 half-time faculty. [A baccalaureate prepared adjunct faculty is appropriate for the half-time schedule.]

The same faculty staffing pattern continues for subsequent years as long as enrollment remains static. Enrollment projections are 40 practical nursing acceptances and 20 registered nursing acceptances each year. The Board of Nursing mandates a maximum 1:10 teacher to student ratio in clinical settings. Increasing enrollment necessitates hiring additional clinical adjunct faculty if the ratio becomes 1:11. Clinical adjunct faculty may be baccalaureate prepared as long as the lead instructor for the course is Master's prepared in nursing.

2. Impact on facilities

The impact to classroom space will be minimized with 20 PN candidates being admitted in the fall and spring and 10 RN candidates being admitted in the fall and spring. Also, the practical nursing program will be twelve continuous months with a full summer semester offering which further reduces the classroom strain. The registered nursing program will be offered at traditional and nontraditional times on weekends and evenings which will facilitate access for the working LPN. Many of the respondents to the survey conducted last fall said they would need to continue working while pursuing their education. This also decreases classroom overload and allows practical nursing students access during the day and registered nursing students access at other times.

a. library--major purchases (e.g., subscriptions, collections, computerized search capabilities...

The College of Technology library and skills laboratory are adequate for practical nursing program students. Registered nursing students will use St. Patrick's Hospital and the Mansfield library more. One of the available services is the interlibrary loan and document delivery services program through Mansfield library. Current Mansfield holdings also include a sizeable collection of professional nursing references. With the program expansion, either purchasing or borrowing up-to-date equipment will be necessary to supply the skills laboratory. Current library holdings are adequate for practical nursing. When registered nursing is offered, holdings at the library at Saint Patrick Hospital as well as the Mansfield library will be more heavily utilized.

b. computer services--major purchases of software and hardware, as well as related services...

There may be a slight increase in students to the College through the health core and the PN programs but

present facilities will be able to handle the need.

c. telecommunications—Not a factor: traditional teaching environment.

d. equipment –No new equipment, repair or maintenance above what is already provided Is foreseen.

e. space/capital requirements--e.g., new facilities, building modifications, or renovations

No new space or facilities, renovations are needed

f. support services--other services necessary to support the program.

The UM-MCOT full service student services are presently staffed to meet the needs of the proposed program.

3. Costs, to be submitted in detail for the first year, for the biennium, with an estimate of continuing costs of the program over a five year period.

a. summary of **direct program costs** in terms of internal, reallocation, new state funding, and other sources;

Business Technology/Medical Office Technology

PROGRAM	Prog CrHr	Fall 04	Spr 05	Sum 05	Fall 05	Spr 06 NT**	Sum 06	Fall 06	Spr 07	Sum 07
Existing LPN Prog		80	60		40	20	20	20	20	20
Pre-Health Core (Gen.ed)		20	20	20	20	20	20	20	40	20
New PN Program			20	20	10	20	20	20	20	20
New RN Program										
Total Nurs Stu		80	80	20	70	80	20	40	60	20
Total Students		100	100	40	90	100	40	60	80	40
Clinical Site Posit.		60	60	20	50	60	20	40	40	20
CREDIT HOURS										
Program Sem Hours	68	1400	1050		700	350				
LPN Program										
Pre-Health Core	16	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320	320
PN Program	27		340	300	340	640	300	340	640	300
RN Program	29				150	290		290	290	
Total PN/RN Prog	72									
Total Stu Cr Hrs		1720	1710	620	1510	1600	620	950	1250	620
Billable Cr Hrs		1200	1200	620	1080	1200	620	720	960	620
REVENUE										
Tuition Rate @ 88.80		\$106,560	\$106,560	\$55,056	\$95,904	\$106,560	\$55,056	\$63,936	\$85,248	\$55,056
>13 cr hr @\$7.00		\$3,640	\$3,570		\$3,010	\$2,800		\$1,610	\$2,030	
Total Revenue		\$110,200	\$110,130	\$55,056	\$98,914	\$109,360	\$55,056	\$65,546	\$87,278	\$55,056
EXPENSES										
Existing Nurs Fac		\$38,993	\$38,993	\$38,993	\$38,993	\$40,162	\$40,162	\$40,162	\$41,367	\$41,367
Adjunct Faculty		\$11,092	\$13,094	\$8,000	\$11,646	\$13,749	\$8,000	\$12,228	\$14,436	\$10,000
Benefits		\$11,549	\$11,549	\$11,549	\$11,549	\$11,549	\$11,549	\$11,549	\$11,549	\$11,549
Travel		\$350	\$350	\$200	\$1,050	\$1,050	\$200	\$1,050	\$1,050	\$200
Professional Svc		\$100	\$100	\$50	\$100	\$100	\$50	\$100	\$100	\$50
Communication		\$700	\$700	\$100	\$750	\$750	\$100	\$750	\$750	\$100
Supplies		\$1,000	\$1,000	\$366	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$366	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$366
Rentals		\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100
Misc		\$100	\$100	\$50	\$100	\$100	\$50	\$100	\$100	\$50
Total Expenses		\$63,984	\$65,986	\$59,408	\$65,288	\$68,560	\$60,577	\$67,039	\$70,452	\$63,782
SUMMARY										
Annual Revenue*			\$220,330			\$263,330			\$207,880	
Annual Expense			\$(129,970)			\$(193,256)			\$(198,068)	
Net			\$90,360			\$70,074			\$9,812	

*Does not include 04 Sum

b. contractual services, with major services itemized;

No contractual services are included in the plan.

c. non-contractual goods and services, including library and computer time costs

No non-contractual goods or services are needed for this program.

d. travel, itemized by purposes;

Because there will be some expansion of clinical sites to meet the demands of area health care facilities, some travel expenditures for local travel to sites has been planned.

e. equipment, with major purchases itemized;

No major purchases of equipment are needed for the Program. Continued cooperation with our health care partners will garner used equipment as needed.

f. capital construction or renovation—No capital construction or renovation will be needed.

g. telecommunications--No major telecommunications expenditures will be needed.

4. Impact on enrollment, numbers of students

a. planned student/faculty ratios;

Classroom work will be 15-20:1 while clinicals will be 10:1

b. any special admission standards or enrollment limits;

Students must take the COMPASS and writing assessment as part of the admission process at the UM-MCOT. Students must successfully complete the health core before moving into the PN program. Students must successfully complete the PN licensing before moving into the RN program. No special efforts for recruitment are deemed necessary since here-to-fore we have had a waiting list of several years

c. profile of the student targeted for enrollment

A typical student in the present LPN program is in her mid to late twenties with approximately half being single mothers. Student academic preparation ranges from GED to Masters degree education. We anticipate the same type enrollment in the PN program while in the RN program the range of students will be very diverse ranging from a person in her twenties to working professionals that are in their 50s. Projected employment for CNAs, PNs, and RNs is very good. Both place-bound students and others are finding ample opportunities in the health care industry. Planned length of study is two years. Because we are dealing with non-traditional students, these estimates may be affected in many ways. Student preparation and retention are key elements in the program.

d. projected size of the program as measured by enrollments...

The program will initially go through a transition stage moving from the LPN program to first the CAN/PN program than moving PN students into the RN program. The program is budgeted on attracting FTEs of 60 students/year in the pre-health core, 40 students/year in the PN, and 20 students/year in the RN Program.

e. critical mass (full and part-time) needed to keep the program academically sound and financially viable; and The program is budgeted on attracting FTEs of: 60 students/year in the pre-health core, 40 students/year in the PN, and 20 students/year in the RN Program.

f. if off-campus or by telecommunications, differences between students' profile and/or student services. The program will not be delivered off campus or by telecommunications.

5. Relationship to other programs on campus

There will be additional enrollments in our general education program to facilitate increased enrollment in the pre-health core, which will be covered by general adjunct pool dollars and increased class access through the University's quality improvement program.

6. Relationship to other institutions, including:

a. duplication-describing similar existing programs in the State or region

Presently, there is only one similar CNA/PN/RN program in the state located at Montana Tech. The 4-year RN programs at Salish Kootenai and MSU are non-seamless programs that do not meet the needs of the student populations afore mentioned or the demands for RNs in the Missoula area. Coordination with these programs has been an integral part of this CNA/PN/RN program development.

b. uniqueness of the program

This program is unique in that it is not presently available in the Western part of Montana, although it has been identified as a very high need by students and the allied health profession. It provides seamless articulation for students progressing from CNA to PN to RN. In addition, students completing the entire program will be poised to enter a BSRN program.

c. provisions for articulation

MSU will only articulate one of the classes from our present LPN program for a possible 2 hours of credit. The programs between Montana Tech and this proposed program will be articulated very closely. Articulation and close coordination with Salish Kootenai will continue in both a course work environment and in the clinical sites

Process Leading to Submission of Proposal--Indicate how the recommendation to submit this **proposal to**

the Board of Regents was formulated.

This program proposal recommendation has been developed in a process that the UM-MCOT has orchestrated for over two years. The process started first with dialogue with our allied health care partners, conversations with past students, input from nursing professionals working in the region and faculty research into programs that would best meet student needs. Advisory committees were consulted and proposals brought forth to peer groups around the state. It was apparent that the LPN route for students was not meeting the needs nor preparing students for the tasks that were facing them in the constantly changing health care environment.

1. Please name **faculty committees** or councils that have reviewed and approved the program
The program incorporated the University approval process going through faculty governance's ASCRC and faculty Senate.
2. If **outside consultants** have been employed, please list the names ...
No outside consultants were employed for this program development activity.

Appendix

Letters of Support

Salish Kootenai College**

Box 117
Pablo, MT 59855
Ph. (406) 275-4800
Fax (406) 275-4801

February 9, 2004

Ms. Margaret Wafsted
Coordinator, Nursing
UM/COT/Missoula
Missoula, MT

Dear Ms. Wafsted:

Salish Kootenai College currently accepts into Advanced Placement in our ASN program your practical nursing students who meet certain prerequisites. The students have several options for advanced entry into the ASN program. They are awarded a range of 16-27 nursing credits, dependent on the option chosen. Approximately twenty University of Montana and UM/COT/Missoula general education credits in Communication, Math/Sciences, and Social Sciences are accepted for transfer.

We would be pleased to articulate your proposed RN/ASN graduates directly into our RN/BSN program. Salish Kootenai College does require additional credits in Native American Studies, which could be completed at UM or concurrently at SKC while the RN Colleagues (students) are enrolled in the RN/BSN program.

Within the next two years, SKC may modify the general education and nursing curriculum requirements for graduation. We will keep you apprised of any changes.

Best wishes in your program development endeavors!

Sincerely,

Jacque Dolberry, RN, MS
Director, Nursing Department

****Original on File**

Partners in Home Care, Inc.

Bringing Health Care Home

June 3, 2003

President Dennison
University of Montana
Office of the President
109 Main Hall
Missoula, MT 59812

Subject: Letter of Support to establish a University of Montana College of Technology
Licensed Practical Nurse to Registered Nurse Career Track in Missoula, Montana.

Dear Board of Regents and President Dennison,

This is a letter of support urging the Board of Regents to approve the establishment of a career track nursing curriculum to be established in Missoula. This is an idea that is not new to education. It requires no data from me, an employer of professional nurses to tell you about the shortage of nurses. We need enough nurses educated to work in hospitals and nursing homes. Because of that shortage, there is a severe shortage of baccalaureate-prepared nurses to work in the highly complex settings such as home health care and hospice like ours.

There are three strong arguments to support up-front expenditures to establish such a career-track option in Western Montana:

- The population is aging in Montana at a higher rate than national. There is a current and growing need for about 25 percent more technically-prepared nurses (LPN) who can receive a relatively short education (4 semesters) and be well prepared clinically to immediately be employed by hospitals and nursing homes. The beauty of the practical nursing programs is that the focus is on clinical skills. Nurses with good clinical skills are less costly to initially employ.
- Once LPN level nurses grow in the work force, there is the option to retain them in the profession of nursing to progress into leadership or specialties. In order to move into the progressive scope, the nurse must meet the minimum licensure competencies as a Registered Professional Nurse. Why must the LPN return to the RN program from the beginning? Academia rejects the concept of measuring academic competency with experience. However, should the educational track be coordinated, the LPN could then step into the next track, thus saving the health care institution the cost of turnover and loss of workers while they must start completely over to become a Registered Nurse.
- Finally, the care of human beings requires a wide array of competencies depending upon the setting. The shortage of nurses, whatever the educational preparation, is now a severe problem of access to health care. The answers have always been to "down" substitute, but we have trickled down the bottom of the ladder by this practice jeopardizing health and public safety. Having served on the Montana State Board of Nursing from 1991 to 1998, I can assure anyone that this crisis is indeed happening in the State of Montana because of our geographic diversity. We must create our own solutions to our own problems.

I have been employed as a Registered Professional Nurse for 34 years. My education began in Montana. Montana lags behind in progressive thinking in nursing education, and has done so because of past influence of close-minded academic leaders in nursing. After all, these nursing schools are small businesses in themselves. The College of Technology has come up with a creative and flexible approach that is very appealing to the prospective students. The Regents should only consider the public good to be achieved. This career track is a cost-effective program because the students can remain employed while pursuing the second track. Many people have been kept out of the career by artificial academic barriers!

I will be happy to testify or provide other information in support of this program. I emphasize that as a home care and hospice provider, my agency probably would not immediately benefit from this concept, but we employ many LPN staff who, by now, would make terrific Registered Nurses. If there is a program in existence where I might offer tuition assistance and not lose a valuable employee, I will support it.

Thank you for your time and interest. I hope this information is helpful.

Sincerely,

/s/

Nancy Heyer, R.N., B.S., M.B.A.
Executive Director

Riverside Health Care Center

1301 East Broadway, Missoula, MT 59802
406/721-0680 FAX: 406/721-9788

June 26, 2003

Margaret Wafstet, RN MN
Practical Nursing Program Director
U of M/Msla-COT
909 South Ave West
Missoula, MT 59801

Re: Letter of Support to establish a University of Montana college 0 Technology
Licensed Practical Nurse to Registered Nurse Career Track in Missoula, Montana

Dear Mrs. Wafstet,

I am writing in support of expanding a program to aid nursing careers. I am a graduate of such a program, and now I am the Director of Nursing here at Riverside Health Care here in Missoula, Montana. You receive the same medical education, take the same NCLEX exam, and are in the working field. At this time, nurses are in high demand and they are few out there. An Associate program, as describe in the proposal, is to get nurses out in the working force. This is a program that focuses on experience as a primary way of learning, along with the classroom studies. This would be a huge benefit for Missoula and would help solve some of the nursing shortage.

I don't feel this program would interfere with the BSN program, it would allow the BSN students to focus more on their advanced studies. The nursing shortage is always going to have its ups and downs. Having a program that can get nurses out in the working world faster would help balance the problem.

Thank you for time and consideration in this matter. Again, I feel this program would be a great benefit.

Sincerely,

/s/

Tammy Eggleston, RN
Director of Nursing

The
Village
Health Care Center *Loving Care From Caring People*

2651 South Avenue West
Missoula, Montana 59804
(406) 728-9162
(406) 543-8128 (Fax)

June 25, 2003

Board of Regents
University of Montana
Missoula, Mt. 59802

Dear Board,

I am the Director of Nursing at a large long-term care facility here in Missoula, and have been an actively employed RN in Montana for 26 years. I am writing this letter to urge you to strongly consider the development of a LPN to RN career track in Missoula.

Through the years, I have seen occasional nursing shortages at various institutions, but the current trend is ongoing and has reached a critical point. It is seriously compromising the quality of care that is being delivered not only to Montanans but to citizens across the United States. As the demand for higher acuity beds continues to grow in long-term care facilities, the need for higher level nurses becomes essential. We are seeing more medically complex patients being admitted to our facilities. This includes those with central IV lines and drips, complicated wounds and infections. These are sicker patients, in general, as they are coming out of hospitals earlier in their recovery period than before. As these people begin their transition from the hospital- to rehab- to home, the demands for highly qualified care increases.

I am currently relying on several travel nurse agencies to fill my staffing needs. The addition of this career ladder would be very advantageous in helping to ease the burden of the nursing shortage and would insure that Montanans continue to receive the best care they deserve. Thank you for your consideration in this very serious and important matter.

Best Regards,

Pauline Shepherd, RN, BSN
Director of Nursing

500 West Broadway, P.O. Box 4587
Missoula, Montana 59806
406/543-7271
www.saintpatrick.org

St. Patrick Hospital and Health Sciences Center

June 3, 2003

Mary Nielsen, RN
University of Montana - College of Technology
909 South Ave. W.
Missoula, MT 59801

Dear Ms. Nielsen:

We at Saint Patrick Hospital want to recognize and support the work of The University of Montana -College of Technology in developing a LPN to RN program, in a manner similar to the way we have supported Salish Kootenai College in their bridge program. Nursing is a complex, ever changing field that offers many opportunities and challenges for those who choose to work in it. The challenge of hospital care to the nurse has become more complex and specialized. An acute care hospital such as ours serves a variety of patients with diverse and very serious or critical needs. These types of patients require total care and monitoring by means of special techniques and knowledge, and who require the use of equipment that is advanced and complex. Nursing personnel who care for our patients are highly skilled in assisting patient recovery from serious injury, disease, or major surgery. The nursing license that best serves this level of care is that of the Registered Nurse. The College of Technology, as well as Salish Kootenai College, providing a means for LPN's to gain this higher level scope of practice would be a great advantage to hospital nursing.

Currently there is a national trend of an increase in the number of nursing job openings with a decrease in the number of nurses to fill these positions. Our country is experiencing a nursing shortage. It would be an advantage to have a close and convenient way to provide to access to educational advancement for nurses. We are in support of this purpose nursing career ladder.

Thank you for time and consideration in this matter. We highly recommend that needed resources be used for this purpose, as well as for continued support of the BSN program through MSU.

Sincerely,

/s/
Joyce C. Dombrowski, RN, MHA
Vice President of Nursing

Community

Medical
Center

June 23, 2003

Margaret Wafstet
25 Canyon View Drive
Missoula MT 59802

Dear Margaret:

We thank you for your time to review and explain to Jim and Devin your strategies for a future RN Certificate Program that you are endeavoring to establish.

I was very impressed and excited to hear about your efforts to develop a two-year program RN Certificate Program at the College of Technology. It would seem that this would certainly be most beneficial in helping to alleviate the nursing shortage that the healthcare field has at this point in time. I would add that Community Medical Center would be most interested in aiding your efforts for this type of educational offering to the LPN's employed here.

We are delighted to be most supportive of a local educational program offering for our employees and folks in our area. This type of program would not only encourage an affordable education to enter into the field of healthcare as RN's, but to provide an avenue for those in the healthcare field to advance their education. Please let me know how we might be of assistance to you in your most appreciated efforts.

Sincerely,

/s/
Jan Perry, RN
Vice President
Patient Care Services

JP:pk

Appendix E

Results of the LPN and Student Survey
February 2003

**RESULTS of the LPN and STUDENT Survey
February 2003**

It would be great if there was an available LPN to RN course in Kalispell at the Flathead Valley Community College.

I can't express how badly I want to continue my education. I believe it is so important to do so, being a mother now has made me realize how limited my opportunities are of furthering my education in the Missoula area. An RN program at the College of Technology would help make it possible to fulfill my dreams of reaching that educational level!

I have been an LPN for 16 years. I have worked a lot of skilled nursing in hospitals. There are a lot of management positions here in Missoula, Montana being run by LPNs or RNs. I turned one in to OSHA due to the manager (non-health care provider) did not know what statutes for nurses are OSHA and many other areas. She was only there to save the company money. I have been praying for getting my ASRN for a very long time here in Missoula.

Mine is a unique situation. I am employed by a home health agency, but it is to care for only one person who happens to be my foster son, whom I've cared for since he was 18 months old (he is now 12). He is medically fragile with a trach, continuous O₂ feeding tube. I've had many nursing experiences in my almost 30 years of being an LPN, including hospital, office, home health and overseas experiences. As I am rather home bound, I would love to see a program locally (Missoula), maybe some computer classes offered (?) what a good idea this program is!

This would be the best program for me, so that I would continue to work at my present job and get my RN degree.

Missoula really needs an RN program! I am currently attending school at Salish Kootenai College to pursue the RN program. In my opinion it is a major inconvenience to drive Highway 93 early in the mornings and late in the evenings for approximately three hours a day (not to mention dangerous). Missoula has a rather large medical community in need of more nurses all the time. We need more educational opportunities to meet student's needs!

There are a lot of LPNs that would love to get our RNs if the program was more accessible to us. This program would benefit a lot of us.

I would be very interested in a program where my general education requirements and Anatomy and Physiology at The University of Montana will be accepted and helpful in earning my associates RN in nursing.

If I can help in any way please let me know! We need this program in the worst way in Missoula. I have my general education requirements done and with a 3.24 GPA, there is no place for me at the MSU program at the U of M! How SAD!

The program I'm currently in is not "C" grade average friendly – Montana (webform) needs a ladder program.

Currently on Worker's Compensation Rehab program due to injury (car accident) while on the job. I plan on going back to nursing after I've used my Work Comp benefits.

Current Clinical Lab Tech license. Have taken additional classes towards Assoc RN already. Need to know what classes taken as an LPN apply towards the Assoc. RN program and the additional classes already taken apply towards a possible challenge test for an RN Assoc.

I have an active LPN license, but have not worked as an LPN for five years. I am currently employed as a health care assistant. I have completed all requirements for Regents College RN program except clinical and state boards. I would need a refresher course (LPN) in order to pass clinical. I would also be interested in having RN clinical trials in Missoula.

Delighted to think there might be a program for LPNs to upgrade licensure to RN. Excellent! Thank you for contacting me – any way I can help, I will! I'd like to be the first one through. Put me on your Missoula list! I've done all but the clinical CPNE, through NY at Albany, the distance education for Excelsior. Prefer to go through you than drive to Wisconsin. Plus, I've gone through the Parish Nurse program at Carroll College Gustatson – excellent program.

Please continue to send information concerning this opportunity.

I am very excited to hear about this program! Please continue to send me information.

If this doesn't happen in Missoula, I will be spending my money at a college outside Montana. Let's keep the money in Montana!

I am currently working on my RN through RUE. I would prefer to take the courses on campus, but the distance learning program is much less expensive.

I would need full grants, plus, to attend full-time days as I am the sole income earner for our family of seven! If this is not available, I would have to attend part-time evenings and weekends.

For some traveling is almost out of the question (with work and families).

Is there a possibility of LPN experience and licensing counting toward a greater share of the RN education?

I don't know if I would actually do this now because I am too tired. I would have definitely done it if it was available in '95.

Since I would have to work while going back to school, having classes available in evening hours and weekend, also during summer, would help greatly to pursuing RN degree.

Would like school information and school general information sent to me.

I am currently studying for my RN in a home study course, but I need more discipline. However, I would like to see something for the LPNs being that I already have a lot of nursing experience. It would be nice to have something convenient, but disciplinary for nurses who want to go up the ladder and succeed.

I would like to know how long the program would take to get through, when only able to go part-time. However, I realize this answer is probably very individually based.

Please consider those of us who work full time day shift.

Please get this program going! I know several LPNs who would do this if it was local. You can put my name on the top of the list please! I can't believe St. Pat's wouldn't help, looking at the shortage they are facing in the near future.

Would even be nice if they had some sort of internet type.

Live very close to college that offers RN program (2 years) but it doesn't offer class times conducive to working and going to school at the same time.

I am excited to hear about this program coming to UM/COT! I would like to know more if the program gets up and running. So please keep in touch! Thank you!

Thanks for your continued support and perseverance in "our" nursing field. I hope you are happy, well and blessed.

Please continue to keep me posted. I would also be interested in a physician based coding program.

I believe there are many of us who would like to pursue our RN degree. However, for those of us with families, traveling is not an option. So we stay as an LPN making lower wages, always dreaming of what we could've done. If we are able to institute an RN program from the PN program, many of us will be able to pursue our dreams while still being mothers and wives.

I would love the opportunity to further my education in nursing.

I would love to get my RN, but I also have a really good job and I wouldn't want to lose it. My employer would be willing to work with me and I would be very interested in helping with a new program. Thank you for all you do.

I am looking into distance learning at this time because my husband's job is six months in Montana and six months in Colorado. I've been unable to go to school at two different places.

I am undecided at this point. Currently I work full time as a clinical research coordinator (certified) and getting my RN would do nothing for me at my current job. I've been at this position since 1995, only if I intended to leave would I be interested.

I would like to be contacted if and when the new program is started.

I am interested, and I have thought about doing the Salish K. College program – Also I have looked in to Regency program – would really love having the opportunity in Missoula and be able to continue working also.

I also have an AAS degree in Business Management. I would seek to transfer credits from my general course work.

I would give a whole lot to be able to accomplish this here while working – which I have to do.

I feel that this program is very much needed in Missoula. I would be very excited to be able to continue my education without having to move.

Very interested!

Full or part time doesn't matter, but it would be nice if the program would still allow us to work full time during the day if possible. I would love evening and weekend classes! Or even home stuff too.

Would really like to get the program here.

I would like to start this program 2003 in the fall. My daughter would also like to start in the fall.

We really need this program here in Missoula, almost every LPN I work with expresses interest in this program and I feel it would be well worth the while to create this for the people of this area. Thank you for your efforts.

I have my own medical research business.

This was being considered even in 1987 when I graduated. I'm very excited to see it become a reality. I would definitely be interested. Thank you.

My current position is full time LPN/Office Mgr in a private MD office.

If possible, it would be great if we could do some classes via the internet so we can be at home.

I am very much interested could attend some days and evenings, weekends in Missoula only as I work part time.

I would like to receive any information about this program as it becomes available. Thanks.

I think this would greatly improve the availability of nurses to the hospitals.

I have been interested in a program like this for a long time.

I would very much like to attend classes at the COT to finish the RN level of education. I don't want to have to leave Missoula to achieve this education. I feel that the faculty at UM-COT are more than capable of providing this education and I look forward to working with these faculty in the future.

I have just completed an Associate of Science RN program with Excelsior College of Albany, NY, and intend to take the NCLEX-RN in February 2003. I do feel that Missoula and all of Montana would be well served to have another ASN-RN program available.

I am currently pursuing ASN through home study and driving from Victor to Helena to take tests – sure would be nice to not drive so far to become an RN. Also a program would help others pursue their careers.

I hope to be retiring soon, but this is really needed. I wish it had come sooner. I would have taken advantage of it.

I'm so pleased to see this necessary step finally becoming a possibility!

I feel nursing should create a union; more benefits, perks, etc. and higher salary. D/t 8 responsibilities, AIDS, TB and paperwork, women's careers are unjustifiably low in wages. High in overtime work and are expected to work when sick corporations and private businesses use guilt as a factor or mandatory PRN work on days off.

I am a massage therapist and use my nursing with my work. My emphasis is in massage currently. However, I do semi-part-time nursing.

I could not afford to go to school and pay my bills.

I am 57 years old and no longer interested in more schooling. Would have been 10-15 years ago!

I would have been interested in years past. I am glad to see the possibility to others.

I am interested in an associate LPN degree.

Perhaps in the future. I would be unable to continue my education at this time.

Currently working towards ADRN degree through Excelsior College and RUE