



College of Technology
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May 11, 2005

Jane Karas, PhD
President
Flathead Valley Community College
777 Grandview Drive
Kalispell, MT 59901

Dear Dr. Karas:

This letter supports Flathead Valley Community College's (FVCC's) proposal to establish a Practical Nursing program. The five current Practical Nursing programs are undergoing changes that may result in fewer graduates, at a time when a shortage of nurses appears imminent. The addition of ten more licensed practitioners will not completely solve that shortage, but it is a positive effort. In addition, only a small number of graduates from the University of Montana-Missoula, College of Technology program have sought employment in northwest Montana, leaving the Flathead Valley employers without ready access to a pool of Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs).

This proposed program does not appear to negatively impact the nursing programs in Missoula. There is no proposal to utilize clinical sites in Missoula, which is already a congested clinical area. There appears to be a pool of individuals interested in being faculty members, which also does no harm to current programs by attempting to entice faculty to leave and come to FVCC.

The FVCC proposal is presented as an effort to allow employers access to a pool of LPNs which then allows the Registered Nurses in the community to function in the most appropriate roles for their licensure level. The proposal recognizes the need to prepare graduates for entry level nursing practice, at the same time as there is a need to prepare those graduates to continue their education if they choose. This is consistent with the curriculum revisions being proposed by the five current practical nursing programs.

This proposal is solidly in line with activities in nursing education state-wide. It recognizes a need in the area, and very appropriately presents solutions. It does not appear to negatively impact other programs. I would encourage the Montana Board of Nursing and the Montana Board of Regents to grant approval to this program.

Sincerely,

Margaret Wafstet, MN, RN
Practical Nursing Program Director
College of Technology

MW:su



College of Nursing

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Making Montana healthier through excellence in Nursing Education.

May 10, 2005

Linda Hunt, PhD, OTR
Director, Training for Health and Education Opportunities
Flathead Valley Community College
777 Grandview Drive
Kalispell, MT 59901

Dear Dr. Hunt:

Thank you for sharing the study conducted by Flathead Valley Community College to determine the feasibility of establishing a Practical Nursing Program. There is definitely a need for additional Licensed Practical Nurses. The program, as you describe it, should not impact our ability to continue with the Montana State University-Bozeman offerings in the Kalispell area. The clinical areas of greatest concern are the specialty areas of pediatrics, obstetrics and psychiatric nursing. If you place your students in these settings in the summer, we should not be in competition.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. Nichols".

Elizabeth G. Nichols, DNS, RN, FAAN
Dean and Professor