Identifying Bedside Staff Nurse Barriers and Facilitators in Moving from an RN to BSN Degree

Shannon M. Graham, DNP, RN, NE-BC
Center for Nursing Excellence, UAB Hospital
Birmingham, Alabama
UAB (University of Alabama at Birmingham) 
Hospital

- 1137 bed
- Academic Medical Center with 2 campuses
- Approximately 3000 RN’s
- Level 1 Trauma Center
- Level III Regional Newborn Intensive Care Unit
- Comprehensive:
  - Cancer Center
  - Stroke Center
  - Transplant Center
- State of the art Heart & Vascular Center
- 54 bed Spain Rehabilitation Hospital
- Regional referral center
- Largest ambulatory center
IOM – Institute of Medicine Recommendations

- 80% baccalaureate (BSN) prepared by 2020
- Assessed current numbers - 2011
  - 48.7% BSN and 48.6% associate degree (AD)
  - Tuition Assistance program
- Professional Development Goal – 2012
  - Enhance career development activities to promote and assist nurses to return to formal education
Partnership between

- UAB Hospital (UABH)
  - Shannon Graham, DNP, RN, NE-BC
  - Connie White-Williams, PhD, RN, FAAN, NE-BC

- UAB School of Nursing (UAB SON)
  - Rhonda McLain, PhD, RN
  - Dale Tomlinson, DNP, RN

What are the perceived barriers and facilitators of associate degree staff nurses returning to school to obtain a BSN?
Methods

- IRB approved
- Mixed methods
  - Focus group
    - 6 sessions offered
  - Online Survey
    - Create 15 item survey
    - Sent to all AD nurses
Focus groups

- 6 groups / 20 participants

Themes

- Family obligations
- Money
  - Books, fee’s, work schedule
- Pre-requisites
- Support from manager / leadership
Results

- **Survey**
  - N = 356 participants
  - 24% response rate
- **Themes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Facilitators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost of education(money)</td>
<td>Support from family / co-workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family obligations</td>
<td>Online classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work schedule</td>
<td>Personal growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Personal satisfaction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results from survey N=356
Results from Survey

How many years experience do you have as a nurse?

- 1 - 5
- 6 - 10
- 11 - 15
- 16 - 20
- 21 - 25
- 26 - 30
- 31 - 35
- 36 - 40
- 41 - 45
- Greater than 46
Are you:

- Single
- Married
- Widowed
- Divorced

What is your work schedule?

- Full time
- Part time
- Weekends
- Irregular

Do you have children or grandchildren living at home with you?

- Yes
- No

Are you:

- Single
- Married
- Widowed
- Divorced

If you have a degree in another field, what type of degree?

- Diploma
- Associates
- Bachelors
- Masters
- Doctorate
To what degree are each of the following a barrier to returning to school? Where 1 = “not a barrier” and 5 = “greatest barrier”.

- Pre-requisite course work required
- Admissions process for going back to school
- Support at home from family
- Support at school from faculty
- Support at work from co-workers
- Support at work from direct supervisor
- Taking structured classroom courses
- Taking online courses
- Need for face to face interactions
- Equal pay for diploma, AD, BSN
- Previous nursing school experience
- Age
- Anxiety about returning to school
- Using technology
- Fear of failure
- Money loss due to decrease work hours
- Cost of education (money)
- Family obligations
- Work schedule
- Time
To what degree are each of the following a facilitator to returning to school? Where 1 = “not a facilitator” and 5 = “greatest facilitator”.

- Professional growth
- Personal satisfaction
- Enhanced critical thinking skills
- Personal career advancement
- Need to have BSN or higher for management
- Admissions process for going back to school
- Support at home from family
- Support at school from faculty
- Support at work from co-workers
- Support at work from direct supervisor
- Taking structured classroom courses
- Taking online courses
- Need for face to face interactions
- Previous nursing school experience
- Age
- Using technology
- Money
- Family obligations
- Work schedule
- Time
What do you perceive as barriers in pursuing a BSN or higher degree?

- Money/cost
- Time
- Pre-requisites
- Family obligations
- Admission challenges
- Work schedule
- Getting started
- Compensation
- Lack of support from supervisor
- Fear of classes
- Age
- Tuition reimbursement
- Getting admitted
- Perception of no difference between AD and BSN nurse
- Financial support is only for UAB SON
What do you perceive as facilitators to pursuing a BSN or higher degree?

- Professional growth/satisfaction
- Tuition assistance
- Encouragement from nurse managers/flexible work
- Course flexibility/online classes
- Career opportunities/development
- Family/friend support
- Required by UAB
- Support from SON staff
- Peer pressure
- Improve quality of care/patient outcomes
What can we do to facilitate your pursuit of a BSN or higher degree?

- Financial
- Incentives
- Process
  - Getting started
  - Pre-requisites / availability of pre-requisites
  - Clinical hours for work experience
- Management support
  - Flexible work scheduling
  - Encouragement / support from management
Outcomes

- Collaboration with the SON – open forum every month
- Creation of a marketing packet with complete step by step instructions
- “Holding” seats for basic prerequisite classes
- Communication letter from nurse manager
- Formalized recognition of degree obtainment
Current Status

- June 2015
  - 37% AD
  - 63% BSN or higher

- Additional Changes
  - Hiring BSN first
  - Contingency letter
  - BSN required for ANM position