How to Amend Your Sigma Chapter to Add a School of Nursing or Practice Setting

Presented by:

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Objectives

• Discover the requirements & process for officially adding a school of nursing or practice setting to a Sigma chapter
• Learn Sigma’s definition of practice setting as it relates to the 2015 bylaws amendment
• Become aware of special considerations for adding a practice setting vs. a school of nursing to a Sigma chapter
Changes to Sigma Chapter Bylaws

- Prior to 2015 Convention House of Delegates, chapters could only be established in Institutions of Higher Education

- Changes made at 2015 Convention House of Delegates:
  - Chapters may amend their chapter charter by adding a practice setting
  - Institutions of higher education may collaborate with practice settings to start a brand new at-large chapter
Abbreviations & Acronyms

• STTI or Sigma = Sigma Theta Tau International
• SON = School of Nursing, College of Nursing, Institute of Higher Education
• PS = Practice Setting
• CNO = Chief Nursing Officer (Head Nurse)
• BSN = Baccalaureate Degree in Nursing
• MSN = Master’s Degree in Nursing
• DNP = Doctoral Degree of Nursing Practice
Ways to Amend a Chapter

- Chapter + 1 or more schools
- Chapter + 1 or more practice settings
- Chapter + 1 or more schools + 1 or more practice settings
Overview of Charter Amendment Process

• Electronic Portal – NEW Sept 2017
  o Structured process for completing required tasks
  o Frequent, regular direction from staff
  o Application is completed as you complete required tasks within electronic portal

• Application review process
  o Staff Review – meeting(s) to review application drafts
  o Reviewers (2) from the CRTF – clarifications requested if needed
  o Charter Review Task Force group vote – occasionally requests clarification
  o Sigma Governance Committee vote – occasionally requests clarification
  o Sigma Board of Directors vote – notification to groups after BOD vote

• Chartering or Charter Amendment Ceremony process

Average Timeline:
• 12-18 months
Requirements for Adding Institutions of Higher Education & Practice Settings

Adding Institution of Higher Education
• Must be appropriately accredited
• Offers a minimum of a BSN degree or higher
• Has own Dean or equivalent
• Has support from university administration and head of school of nursing

Adding Practice Setting
• Must be appropriately accredited
• Employs professional nurses with a BSN or higher
• Has own CNO or equivalent
• Has support from practice setting administration and CNO
Definition of a Practice Setting

A clinical practice setting is where care is provided by a registered nurse. Clinical practice requires the delivery of health care services by a registered nurse to individuals and communities.

This may include:

- Healthcare systems
- Hospitals
- Clinics
- Surgery Centers
- Nursing Care Centers
Definition of a Practice Setting

• Must have a Chief Nursing Officer

The leadership of the CNO constitutes how larger organizations with multiple locations will be considered

• Ex: Johns Hopkins Medicine
  • 5 hospitals that each have their own CNO
  • Each is considered as 1 practice setting
  • Chapter amended by adding 5 practice settings, even though all are under the Johns Hopkins Hospital System umbrella

• What about the satellite clinics, rehab facilities, doctor’s offices, etc?
  • All additional, smaller locations that do not have their own CNO (but rather share a CNO from one of the 5 hospitals) would be considered part of the larger practice setting of the CNO who oversees the nurses in that location.
Limitations of the Practice Setting

- Cannot start their own, stand alone chapter
- Cannot start an at-large with only practice settings
- Cannot divide from chapter on their own to become a stand alone chapter
- Cannot join multiple chapters
Chapter Considerations
When Adding a School of Nursing or Practice Setting

• Who initiates the contact?

• Why does the chapter want to partner with the SON or practice setting?

• How will it benefit both parties?

• How will members benefit?

• Types of potential collaborations?
Considerations for the SON or Practice Setting

- Does the SON or practice setting want to officially join the chapter/STTI?
- Why does the SON or practice setting want to join?
- How will it benefit both parties?
- How will Nurse Leader members or candidates benefit?
- How will student members or candidates benefit?
- What contributions can the SON or practice setting add to the chapter?
- What are the potential barriers?
Multiple Chapters, SONs, and Hospital Systems in Urban Settings

• What perceptions will other chapters have if one chapter partners with a particular SON or PS?
• What perception will other SONs or PSs have if one group is asked to join over another?
• Is there a chance the partnerships could be viewed as favoritism?

• Will others think that students from the school with the chapter are given preference or favored over students from other schools?
Leadership Inclusion

- Representatives from SONs and/or practice setting(s)
- Minimum requirement per the bylaws
  - One counselor is required from each SON or PS within an at-large chapter
  - Counselor to represent PS is not required to be faculty or hold any certain position at the PS
- VP is recommended to represent each group in addition to counselor
- Including leaders from the SON and PS should be focus of Leadership Succession
- Equal representation
Logistics and Operations

• **Physical Distance**
  - Will student members want to travel away from campus?
  - Will members working outside of the university want to travel to campus?

• **Where, When, How**
  - Will events be rotated between locations?
  - Will events take place at different times of the day to accommodate nurses who may be working night or weekend shifts?
  - How will the events be planned at different locations?
Logistics and Operations

• Finances
  • How will the group handle finances for events at each location?
  • Will there be more than one team planning events?

• Elections and Chapter Leadership
  • Appointments until next election
  • When is the next election cycle?
  • What is the size of the pool of potential candidates representing the different membership types?
  • Will you utilize the optional (but recommended) VP to represent each entity?
Logistics and Operations

- Members’ Perceptions
  - How will student members view the amendment?
  - How will members working in a practice setting view the amendment?
  - How will members working outside of the SON and PS view the amendment?
  - What additional considerations will be made to involve members who work nights or weekends?
  - Will you be able to increase engagement with individuals working various shifts in the practice setting?
Chapter Board and Membership Vote

• Chapter Board Vote
  o Majority
  o Document in meeting minutes

• Membership Vote
  o All active members
  o 30-days’ notice of vote or voting window
  o ¾ approval of all returned votes
    (if 30-days’ notice given)
Changes to Bylaws, Policies and Procedures

- Draft proposed at-Large Chapter Bylaws using current template
- Discuss which Policies and Procedures need updated
- Document collaboration steps and efforts
- Reviewer expect to see collaborative efforts and ability for groups to work together
Communication With Members

- **Who?**
  - Active members, inactive members, potential new members

- **What?**
  - Explanation of intention, potential timeline for voting, application, approval, charter amendment ceremony

- **When?**
  - After the board has voted to move forward, and the SON or PS has gained support.
Communication With Members

• How?
  • Newsletter, emails, The Circle, in person, at events

• Why?
  • Transparency... give members time to ask questions, increase engagement
Timeline for Amending a Chapter

- Partnership and Collaboration: 6 months or more
- Application Prep and Submission: 2-4 weeks recommended
  - Meetings with staff to review drafts, feedback, revisions, clarifications
- Application review: 16-20 weeks
- Ceremony planning:
  - 12-16 weeks (North American region)
  - 16-20 weeks (all other regions)
Questions?

• Sigma Website
  • Start a Chapter
    https://www.sigmanursing.org/connect-engage/chapters/starting-a-sigma-chapter
  • Charter Amendment process
    https://www.sigmanursing.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/chapter-charter-amendment/22f589946f86225bce7ff000034804e.pdf?sfvrsn=0

• Get started in the new online portal (new chapter or amendment)
  Consult request:
  • https://webportalapp.com/sp/sigma

• Email developinghs@sigmanursing.org

• 888.634.7575 (US/Canada toll-free)
• +1.317.634.8171 (International)