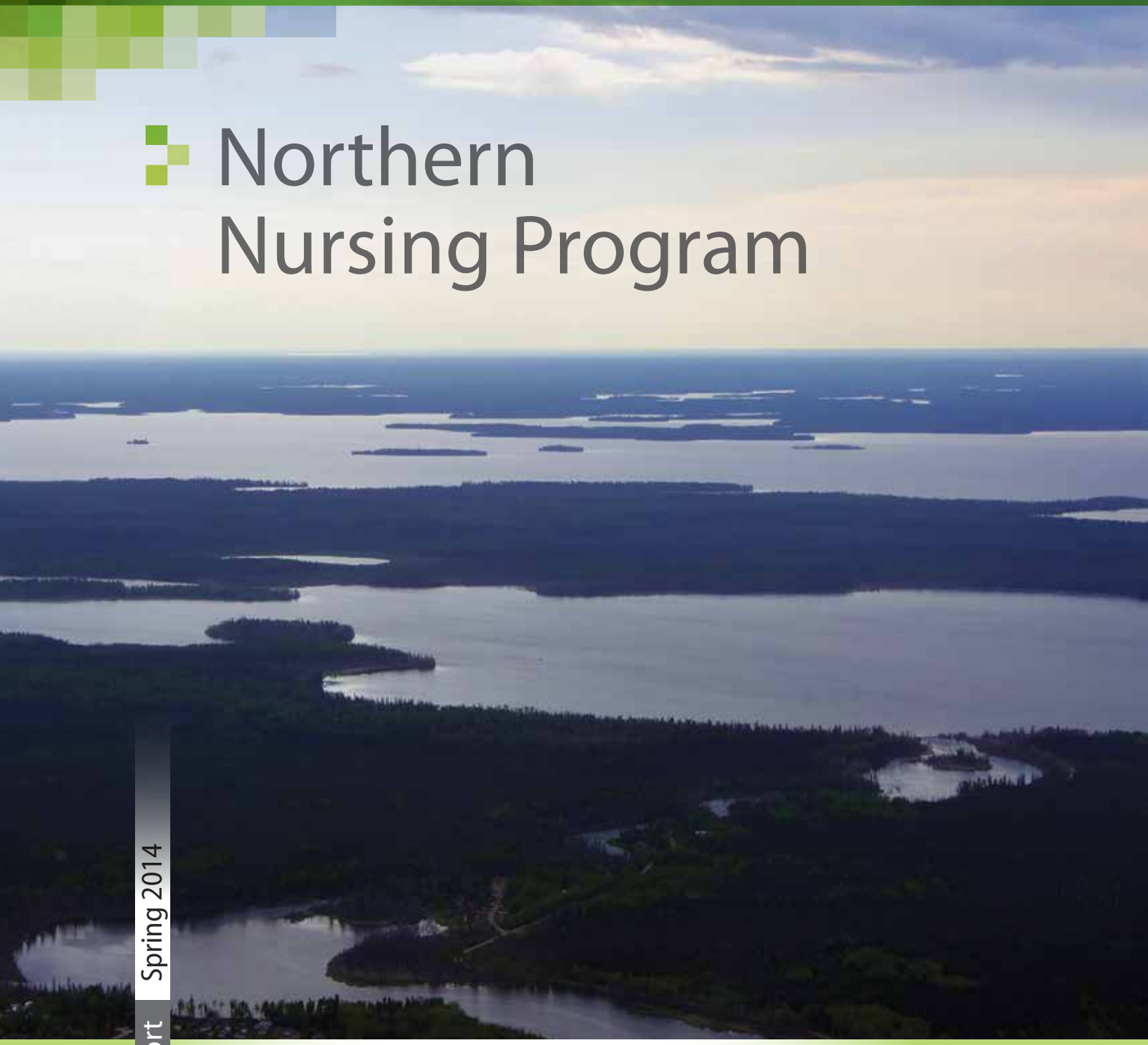
Northern Nursing Program



Semi-Annual Report Spring 2014

University of Saskatchewan
College of Nursing

3rd year BSN students in La Ronge

Introduction

In September 2012, the College of Nursing began offering a full Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree in Ile-a-la-Crosse and La Ronge. To keep regional stakeholders informed about our programming, it was decided we would provide semi-annual reporting on program indicators, such as student numbers and success rates, clinical placements, K-12 outreach and relevant research activities. Our hope is that by working closely with local stakeholders we will:

1) improve recruitment and retention;
2) provide a contextually relevant nursing education for our northern students;
3) leverage clinical placements and other program components to positively impact northern health; and
4) position our graduates to be community leaders and improve northern health, through both individual efforts and structural reforms. We will continue to seek and invest in relationships that are mutually beneficial for the College of Nursing, our students and our northern partners. We appreciate your guidance in developing these.

University of Saskatchewan
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Student Registration for 2014/15

The nursing seat distribution continues to be five seats in Ile-a-la-Crosse and 10 seats in La Ronge per academic year. In spring 2014, we received 11 applications for Ile-a-la-Crosse and 18 for La Ronge. It is important to note, these are applications, not admissions. Given most students take Chemistry 112 in the spring term, which is a prerequisite for admission into nursing, admission numbers will depend on the successful completion of the Chemistry course. In the Fall 2014 Stakeholder's Report, we will provide final numbers on admissions (numbers and demographics) for the 2014-15 academic year. We feel the large number of students interested in nursing and advancing through the pre-professional year is very positive.

The projections for current students continuing in our program in fall 2014 are as follows: nine students entering year 4; eight in year 3 (of which six are in cohort and two are out of cohort) and seven are out of cohort repeating part of year 2, in addition to the new entrants.

Student Satisfaction with use of Remote Presence Technology in Teaching

The College of Nursing conducted a survey of our northern students in fall 2013 to gauge their satisfaction with the use of Remote Presence technology (RP-7: our "robot") that allows Saskatoon-based faculty to connect to the clinical skills labs in Ile-a-la-Crosse and La Ronge and move around and interact with the students. Although we are all new to the technology, and are the first to use it for educational purposes, there was a generally high rate of satisfaction with its use. We were unable to release the results of the survey until the end of the winter semester in order to protect the students' confidentiality. The results can be found on the adjacent page.

3rd year BSN students in Ile-a-la-Crosse and Assistant Professor Carol Bullin on the RP-7

Remote Presence Student Satisfaction Survey, November 2013

69%	of students agree/strongly agree with the statement that "teaching of clinical skills is made possible because the Professor uses the RP-7 to interact with me in the lab."
94%	of students feel comfortable with their Professor teaching them using the robot.
88%	of students disagree/strongly disagree with the statement that "my Professor cares less about me by teaching with the RP-7 instead of in person."
75%	of students agree that communication with the Professor using the RP-7 is easy.
94%	of students support the College of Nursing's use of the RP-7 in the nursing degree program. One student (6%) was neutral on the issue.
75%	of students disagree/strongly disagree with the statement that "the RP-7 makes it more difficult for me to communicate with the Professor the way I would like to."
6%	Only one student (6%) thought the RP-7 is annoying, while 94% disagreed/strongly disagreed.
56%	of students were neutral as to whether the use of the RP-7 to teach nursing students should become a regular practice. 38% strongly agreed it should; 6% disagreed.
12%	Two students (12%) were concerned the Professor couldn't adequately assess them using the RP-7. Fifty percent (50%) were not concerned and 38% were neutral on the issue.
6%	One student (6%) was not confident they were learning proper technique for nursing skills using the RP-7. 69% of students were confident they were learning proper techniques, while 25% were neutral on the matter.
63%	of students strongly agreed and 31% agreed (for a total of 94%) that the combination of an onsite RN lab facilitator and the Professor using the RP-7 provides a good learning environment. One student (6%) did not agree.

Clinical Placements

Clinical and lab experiences are a very important part of the nursing program and provide an opportunity for students to develop their nursing skills and knowledge.

The following were the clinical experiences provided for the northern nursing program in the 2013-14 academic year:

YEAR IN PROGRAM	COURSE	# OF STUDENTS	LOCATION OF PLACEMENT	TIME FRAME	CLINICAL HOURS
2	N202	9	Ile-a-la-Crosse-St. Joseph's Hospital La Ronge Hospital Long Term Care Unit	November 27, 28 and December 4, 2013	24
2	N221	6	Battleford Hospital-Medical and Surgical Unit	May 26-June 27, 2014	144
3	N333	11	Battleford Hospital-Medical and Surgical Unit	November 4-November 29, 2013	156
3	N331	10	Meadow Lake Hospital - Obstetrical Units	March 10-April 4, 2014	72
3	N331	10	Rossignol School in Ile-a-la-Crosse (K-12); and Senator Myles Venne School and Bells Points Elementary School, La Ronge - Pediatrics	Winter 2014	72

High school students attended the Northern Lights Symposium in Prince Albert and tried their hands at various nursing skills

K-12 Outreach

The College of Nursing organized, for the third consecutive year, the Northern Lights School Division Health Career Symposium in Prince Albert, March 18 & 19. Over 40 students from Prince Albert and northern Saskatchewan had an opportunity to listen to experiences of Aboriginal role models, engage in hands on activities and learn about different health careers. Unfortunately, attendance was impacted by poor weather and driving conditions, but it was a great day for all those who attended.

The Northern Inter-Tribal Health Authority (NITHA) invited the College of Nursing to present at their Northern Health Careers Forum on January 14. Organized in partnership with Keewatin Career Development Corporation (KCDC), the forum reached post-secondary counsellors from across northern Saskatchewan to inform them of a variety of health career educational programs available in the north, including the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program.

We also hosted a booth at the Interprovincial Association on Native Employment (IANE) Career Fair in La Ronge on May 14, where we reached approximately 400 grade 8-12 students.

Research

The following College of Nursing research activities relate directly to the northern nursing program. If your community, organization or clinical practice would benefit from research collaboration with the College of Nursing, please let us know!

Dr. Lorna Butler received an $110,000 award from Grand Challenges Canada to extend the use of Remote Presence technology for distributed nursing education in rural and remote areas of the Philippines and Siberia.

The College of Nursing received national and provincial funding from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation (SHRF) to host an international forum on Remote Presence technology and its use in rural and remote education and clinical practice. In addition to international participants from the United States (Alaska, Ohio and California); Siberia, Russia; and Queson City, Philippines; Canada was well represented by Nain, Labrador and northern Saskatchewan, including the Village of Ile-a-la-Crosse, Town of La Ronge, Northern Inter-Tribal Health Authority (NITHA), Keewatin Yatthe Regional Health Authority (KYRHA), Mamawetan Churchill River Regional Health Authority (MCRRHA) and Northlands College. The international forum report can be accessed online at usask.ca/icngd (under 'Research').

College of Nursing faculty and staff Drs. Jill Bally, Shelly Spurr, Heather Exner-Pirot, Lorna Butler and Mary Ellen Andrews and College of Dentistry faculty member Dr. Alyssa Hayes were awarded the University of Saskatchewan Provost's Project Grant for Innovative Practice in Collaborative Teaching and Learning for using the RP-Xpress (portable model) to supervise and teach nursing students in oral health care, as they examined students at Rossignol School in Ile-a-la-Crosse and Senator Myles Venne School in La Ronge during their Pediatric clinical experience. In addition to providing oral health care to students in the communities, it was one of the first applications of Teledentistry in the country and the first in nursing education, providing an excellent interprofessional learning experience for the nursing students.

La Ronge Mayor Thomas Sierzycki and Forum Chair Dr. Lorna Butler with international delegates attending the Remote Presence Forum

3rd year BSN student from La Ronge completes an oral health assessment during a pediatric clinical experience at Senator Myles Venne School

Presentations

College of Nursing faculty and staff have presented on the use of Remote Presence technology in distributed nursing education at the following conferences:

Northeastern Federal University, Yakutsk, Siberia – Ecology and Health in the North, December 5 & 6, 2013	National Telehealth Conference: Transforming Health Care Delivery & Academic Curriculum, University of Cincinnati, March 20 & 21, 2014	Conference Board of Canada, Saskatchewan Forum, May 27 & 28, 2014
Western and North-Western Region Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing (WNR-CASN), Winnipeg, MB, February 19 - 21, 2014	International Congress of Arctic Social Sciences, Prince George, BC, May 24, 2014	Canadian Nurses Association Biennial Convention, Winnipeg, MB, June 17, 2014
Saskatchewan First Nations ICT Conference, Saskatoon, SK, March 11, 2014	Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing (CASN) Canadian Nursing Education Conference, Halifax, NS, May 26, 2014	

Student Awards

Martin Roy (3rd year student in La Ronge) won the Health and Wellness Nursing Bursary for Aboriginal students ($2500). This College of Nursing award is given to an undergraduate student of Aboriginal ancestry entering their third year of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program, who models a healthy lifestyle.

Phyllis Probert (3rd year student in Ile-a-la-Crosse) won the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses Association (SRNA) Jean Goodwill Award ($500). This award is given to a third or fourth year Aboriginal student in the BSN program who reflects the values of Jean Goodwill, Saskatchewan's first Aboriginal nurse.

The International Centre for Northern Governance and Development (ICNGD) awarded three $5000 travel bursaries to 3rd year students Phyllis Probert (Ile-a-la-Crosse), Savannah Sylvestre(Ile-a-la-Crosse) and Jessica Emisch (La Ronge) to attend a two week Summer Institute on Northern Nursing in Yakutsk (Siberia), Russia. Unfortunately, due to political turmoil, the Summer Institute was cancelled and there was not enough time to organize an alternative international placement. However, the students have been given the option to attend the Aboriginal Nurses Association of Canada annual conference being held in October 2014 in Winnipeg in lieu.

Ongoing Challenges

Housing and Chemistry remain our greatest barriers to recruitment and retention.

We were very pleased to learn of Ile-a-la-Crosse Town Council's announcement to increase housing for students. The greatest need is housing for families, in both La Ronge and Ile-a-la-Crosse. Students continue to drive long distances to attend classes, many of whom have young families and depend on family support for childcare.

We have been working with the University of Saskatchewan's Science Ambassador Program to try to match their services in geographic areas where the majority of our nursing applications are coming from.

Northlands College has also been very proactive in delivering Chemistry 112 in a way that stimulates success for its students.

A number of our students were unsuccessful in some classes and therefore have fallen out of their admission year cohort. The College of Nursing allows students six years to complete their 90 credit units in the nursing program and students can repeat classes they have not successfully completed. However, this does pose some challenges, due to larger class sizes, in courses where a few extra students are repeating the class. Some of our classroom and lab facilities are limited in size, making it difficult to accommodate the increased number of students.

We have learned that students who withdraw from a course are sometimes required to repay their Band if they received Band funding; however, if they fail, they are not required to do so. College of Nursing advisors generally encourage students who will not pass to withdraw instead, as failure impacts their overall average and timely withdrawal does not. We would be interested in working with Post-Secondary Counsellors to address this issue.

The College continues to work with Northlands College and the Student and Enrolment Services Division at the University of Saskatchewan to ensure our northern nursing students have the same access to services as other nursing students provincially.

Previous Reports

The Fall 2013 Northern Nursing Program Semi-Annual Report is available on our website: www.usask.ca/nursing.

For more information, comments or suggestions, please contact:

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