

to implement the study. The Bureau is currently at a 40% vacancy rate; it is possible that this study may have to be contracted to an outside source, which would then impact the administrative budget.

As stated by Higher Education Department, SJM15 does not contain an appropriation.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

Department of Health indicated as follows:

The Division of Health Improvement (DHI), in the Department of Health (DOH), approves all CNA programs in New Mexico but DOH/DHI has no authority over LPN programs. LPN programs are under the authority of the New Mexico Board of Nursing and that board sets the requirements for and approves LPN programs.

The current state approved CNA Certificate is only valid in a certified (Medicare and/or Medicaid) nursing facility. It is not valid in any other health care setting.

The Requirements for Long Term Care Facilities 7 NMAC 9.2.27(A) “Qualifications and Restrictions: No person under eighteen (18) years of age shall provide direct care to residents” could pose a potential issue for students who graduate at age 17 and cannot provide direct care until they reach the age of 18.

Public Education indicates as follows:

- A significant issue arises in that DOH/DHI is the entity that reviews and approves all CNA programs in New Mexico but DOH/DHI has no authority over LPN programs. These are totally under the authority of the New Mexico Board of Nursing and that board sets the requirements for and approves LPN programs.
- The Requirements for Long Term Care Facilities (7 NMAC 9.2.27(A)) states “Qualifications and Restrictions: No person under eighteen (18) years of age shall provide direct care to residents.” This could pose a potential issue for students who graduate at age 17 and cannot provide direct care until they reach the age of 18.
- The PED’s Career-Technical and Workforce Education Bureau assists schools in organizing around the state’s seven Career Clusters (<http://www.workinnewmexico.gov>) that are in alignment to the national 16 Career Clusters’ Initiative (www.careerclusters.org). In doing so, participating high schools have implemented career programs of study that lead to industry certification or postsecondary education opportunities. Under this framework, 15 secondary and 10 two-year college programs (community colleges and branch campuses) offer programs of study under the Health Sciences Cluster, which includes the pathways of Therapeutic Services, Diagnostic Services, Health Informatics, Support Services and Biotechnology Research and Development. The occupation for Certified Nursing Assistants comes under the pathway for Therapeutic Services, of which 11 high schools have a developed program of study.

- DOH/DHI currently reviews and approves CNA programs and would utilize the same criteria to review and approve any developed for schools.
- The current state-approved CNA Certificate issued by the DOH is only valid in a certified nursing facility that accepts Medicare and/or Medicaid.

Higher Education Department indicated as follows:

Certified nursing assistants (CNAs) and licensed practical nurses (LPNs) are important members of the health care team in hospitals, nursing facilities, home health agencies and other health care provider settings. New Mexico has been experiencing shortages in all categories of health care professionals, including CNAs and LPNs.

CNAs are needed to provide routine care, often serving as the eyes and ears of the nurse and freeing the nurse to perform other duties. To become a CNA, an individual must complete a state-approved training program, which includes a minimum of 50 hours of theory and 100 hours of supervised clinical training, and must take a certification test.

LPNs provide a range of duties, including giving injections, taking vital signs, dressing wounds and administering medications. To become an LPN, an individual must graduate from an accredited program that includes both academic and clinical training and experience and take a national examination to become licensed.

Certification for both a CNA and an LPN can serve as a gateway to higher levels of education and medical training such as various levels of registered nursing, emergency medical technician training, physical, occupational or speech therapy, medical school, and many other vital careers in the medical field.

CNAs and LPNs who receive their training beginning at the high school level are more inclined to seek employment that allows them to remain in their home communities.

Currently, most training for CNAs and LPNs occurs in community colleges; a small but growing number of high schools are offering innovative programs that allow qualified and interested students to accomplish all the necessary training to become CNAs while still in high school and thereby graduate from high school with the necessary qualifications to take the certification test and become employed.

The Career Enrichment Center of the Albuquerque Public Schools has a program, the only one in the nation, that allows qualified and interested students to accomplish all the coursework and clinical experience to become an LPN while still in high school and thereby graduate from high school fully prepared to take the National Council Licensure Examination and become employed as an LPN. According to the Career Enrichment Center, in 2009, the program to train LPNs attracted 250 applicants, only 50 of whom could be accepted into the program. As reported in the Albuquerque Journal (Wednesday, September 30, 2009), 100 percent of the graduates (25) of this program passed their national examinations on the initial attempt.

Given the success of the Career Enrichment Center program, the model appears worthy of replication in other high schools that not only benefits high school students by preparing them for significant employment opportunities upon graduation, but also helps to promote career development in the medical profession and address health care professional workforce shortages in the state.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

As stated by Department of Health, staff time and travel for meetings with PED and others to review and discuss standards.

As stated by Public Education Department, having an established program of study for students in a focused occupational area could positively impact the PED's graduation rate, and reduce the number of high school graduates who take remedial courses.

The memorial requests the New Mexico Public Education Department to:

- study existing New Mexico programs that prepare high school students to become CNAs or LPNs and develop guidelines to replicate such programs statewide
- cooperate with the New Mexico Department of Health's Division of Health Improvement in the development of the guidelines to ensure alignment with federal and state requirements for training, certification and licensing of CNAs and LPNs;
- report to the interim Legislative Health and Human Services Committee on progress towards the development of guidelines and efforts to encourage implementation of similar programs in New Mexico high schools by November 2010.

Copies of this memorial shall be transmitted to the Secretary of the New Mexico Public Education Department, Secretary of the New Mexico Department of Health and the principal of the Albuquerque's Career Enrichment Center.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

As stated by Public Education Department, The Career-Technical and Workforce Education Bureau estimates that it could take .5 FTE for a 6-month period to implement the study. The Bureau is currently at a 40% vacancy rate; it is possible that this study may have to be contracted to an outside source, which would then impact the administrative budget.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

As stated by Public Education Department, DOH/DHI is the entity that reviews and approves all CNA programs in New Mexico but DOH/DHI has no authority over LPN programs.

Nursing programs are under the authority of the New Mexico Board of Nursing and that board sets the requirements for and approves LPN programs. The New Mexico Board of Nursing is not named in the bill.

As stated by Higher Education Department, Nationally, according to the United States Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics, Healthcare will generate 3.2 million new wage and salary jobs between 2008 and 2018, more than any other industry, largely in response to rapid growth in the elderly population. Ten of the 20 fastest growing occupations are related to healthcare. Many job openings should arise in all healthcare employment settings as a result of employment growth and the need to replace workers who retire or leave their jobs for other reasons.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

Department of Health states, that there would not be a study by the Public Education Department of existing CNA certification and LPN programs in school settings to determine how to replicate programs for other school settings. NM could continue to experience shortages in the nursing career areas.

PE/svb