HELP WANTED: THE DNP IN MAINSTREAM PRACTICE

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Then

- Research and education focused doctor of nursing
  - EdD (1920s), PhD (1970s)

- Clinical focused doctor of nursing
  - DNS, ND (1980s)

- 2004 AACN recommendations
  - Position statement on practice doctorate
  - DNS degrees reclassified as research-focused doctorate
  - DNP recommended as the terminal degree for nursing practice

Chism, 2009
Then

- IOM recommendations
  - Better educated healthcare workforce
  - Double the number of nurses with doctorates by 2020

- 2006-development of AACN Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice

IOM, 2010
1. Scientific underpinning of practice
2. Organizational and system leadership for quality improvement and systems thinking
3. Clinical scholarship and analytical methods for EBP
4. Information systems/technology and patient care technology for the improvement and transformation of health care
5. Health care policy for advocacy in health care
6. Inter-professional collaboration for improving patient and population health outcomes
7. Clinical prevention and population health for improving the nation’s health
8. Advanced nursing practice

AACN, 2006
Now: Growth of DNP programs

- Current DNP graduates in the US >15,000
- Current enrollments > 14,000
- Program growth – 10X increase from 2002-2013
- Expanded vision of DNP roles—advanced nursing practice vs. advanced practice nursing

O’Dell & Crowley, 2014; AACN, 2014
Now: The DNP in mainstream practice

- AACN defines ‘nursing practice’ broadly
- Expansion of DNP programs in some institutions beyond APRN to include additional tracks:
  - Informatics
  - Nursing Education
  - Executive Leadership
  - Health Care Quality
  - Public Health
  - Other specialty clinical tracks such as palliative care
Current climate

- **Survey of Pennsylvania DNP programs**
  - 14 DNP programs across the state
  - 8 programs participated-589 graduates
    - Majority from nursing administration master’s programs
    - Followed by master’s prepared APRNs
    - Almost 50% worked in acute care after achieving DNP followed by academia (33%).
  - Slow adoption of BSN to DNP

Dunbar-Jacob, Nativio & Khalil, 2013
Current climate

- DNP.org - 6th National DNP Conference in 2013
  - 619 respondents and 370 useable surveys
  - More than 95% of respondents felt prepared for doctoral practice
  - Largest clinical group-NPs and largest nonclinical continues to be executive leadership
  - Upward trend for informatics
  - More DNPs are moving into academia

O’Dell & Crowley, 2013
Current climate

- Survey of 11 students from a midwestern university
  - All were positive about having obtained the DNP
  - Majority said their role had changed/expanded
  - Almost all said that the DNP changed the way they worked in their current role

Melnyk, 2013
What are employers looking for?

- DNPs
  - Clinical roles
  - Executive leadership roles
  - Health policy roles
  - Emerging leadership roles
Job Postings

- Postings on AONE website
  - About 30 CNO/Nursing VP posts
    - Master’s required for most
    - None required a doctorate

- General postings-doctorate required
  - Academia/Education
  - Research Scientist
  - Newer leadership roles such as Director of Professional Practice
Job Postings

- Typical posting does not distinguish between PhD and DNP for the position

- Where a specific degree was requested it was usually a PhD even when competencies were clearly DNP oriented

- Only one position with oversight responsibility for APRNs preferred the DNP
Job Postings: Examples

- Vice President of Professional Performance, Practice & Innovation

“ Leads the development of strong links between evidence-based practice, research, and clinical practice by promoting the utilization/understanding of the research/evidence-based processes into practice to improve patient outcomes, professional nursing practice and the work environment.”

Doctorate degree in related discipline required
Job Postings: Examples

- Director, Nursing Outcomes Improvement - Magnet Programs

“Strong progressive career in nursing clinical practice and leadership with substantial strategic and operational experience in developing and leading clinical nursing programs. Serves as the primary point of contact for the integration and analysis of nursing data related to quality outcomes, patient safety, engagement.”

Preferred / Desired: Graduate of an accredited school of nursing with Ph.D. in Nursing preferred.
Director, Professional Nursing Practice

“A highly visible opportunity exists to oversee the leadership and management functions of our professional nursing practice. Responsibilities include oversight of all aspects of nursing, including: staff development, evidence based practice development, research leadership, peer review modeling, grants/scholarships, academic affiliations, NDNQI and report card coordination, regulatory compliance, P&P/Magnet culture development, and life cycle of activities for assigned services.”

PhD in Nursing highly desired
“Although the AACN’s The Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice (2006) clearly state that the DNP is a practice-focused doctorate that should prepare clinicians for leadership in evidence-based practice (EBP), much confusion exists about academic curricula for the DNP, in comparison with the PhD degree, and the roles DNP graduates should assume in academic and health care settings.”

Melnyk, 2013
Integration of the DNP role

- Health care organizations of all types will continue to be accountable for outcomes related to care delivery.

- Organizations will increasingly seek out individuals with exceptional problem solving skills who can:
  - Access, identify and apply best practice
  - Apply essential elements of quality science and measurement of outcomes to practice
  - Leverage technology and health information systems to improve practice

- Individuals will pursue advanced education for personal and professional growth.
Integration of the DNP role

- Academic standards must be clarified and the appropriate level of rigor applied.
- Measurement of the impact of DNP prepared individuals on patient, population and policy-related outcomes is critical.
- Ultimately, acceptance will be based on performance and outcomes related to the impact of DNP roles within organizations.
Outcomes

- Literature review for articles with at least one DNP author between 2005-2012
- Of 300 articles identified, 175 met inclusion criteria
- 80% published in clinically focused journals
- 75% identified the DNP as the primary author
- Six fold increase in DNP authored publications from 2007-2012

Broome, Riner & Allam, 2013
The DNP is here to stay

What will accelerate and formalize acceptance of DNP in broader nursing and healthcare community?

- Ongoing review and revision of academic standards
- Take every opportunity to promote DNP prepared individuals for appropriate positions across healthcare continuum
- Executive leadership acceptance and advocacy for DNP prepared nurses
Summary

KEEP CALM AND DELIVER OUTCOMES
Reflections

- What will accelerate the movement of DNPs into mainstream practice over the next few years?

- Consider outstanding/developing factors
  - Required entry to APRN practice by 2015
  - National certification exam to demonstrate acquisition of DNP competencies
  - Transition in SONs from post-masters to BSN to DNP
  - Trend of increasing # of DNPs moving into academia

- Top 2-3 recommendations
References


References


