



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TOWARD A NATIONAL REPORT CARD FOR NURSING

May 2011

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BACKGROUND

The need for standardized information on health outcomes for the evaluation of health services is coming into greater focus each year as health care reform and dialogue continues across the country. A critical element for achieving the successful integration of nursing data requirements into electronic health records and the health information system in Canada is a clear vision of the purpose and focus on these nursing data requirements and the support of nursing leaders to achieve that vision.

In the fall of 2010, the Academy of Canadian Executive Nurses (ACEN) Leadership/Policy Committee made the decision to focus on identifying and promoting significant nurse sensitive indicators. The committee chose this initiative in order to make explicit the contribution of nursing to quality health outcomes, as well as to envision a report card that could be used to formulate and drive the quality agenda in the future. The committee contacted researchers in the field and key stakeholders involved in outcome measurement, including Canadian Nurses Association (CNA), Canada Health Infoway (CHI) and the Canadian Institute of Health Information (CIHI). The idea for a national nursing report card was solidified and an invitational Think Tank was convened to launch this work. ACEN and CNA agreed to co-chair a Planning Committee for the Think Tank event to select and define nurse sensitive structure, process and outcome indicators. Funding was solicited from Health Canada for the think tank meeting and the follow-up work.

For participants of the Think Tank to have a shared understanding, the Planning Committee commissioned Diane Doran, RN, PhD, FCAHS, Scientific Director, Nursing Health Services Research Unit (Toronto site), Barb Mildon, RN, PhD, CHE and Sean Clarke, RN, PhD, FAAN from the Lawrence S. Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing to write a synthesis that summarized the state of the science in the measurement of nursing sensitive outcomes and the utilization of nursing report cards entitled: *Toward A National Report Card in Nursing: A Knowledge Synthesis*.

THINK TANK

The *Think Tank: Toward a National Report Card for Nursing* was held in Montreal, Quebec on February 13, 2011 and brought together 50 nurse leaders in health services delivery from each region of the country, as well as thought leaders from other key sectors: research, education, professional associations, informatics, regulatory bodies and federal/provincial/territorial nurse advisers.

The objectives of the Think Tank were for nurse leaders to create a shared vision and critical path for a national report card on nursing; to generate support for the work amongst the nursing leadership community; and to outline the concrete steps to achieve it through collaboration with other national and quality system initiatives for health information in Canada. Discussions over how the excellent work done thus far can be used as a national set of nurse sensitive indicators took place throughout the day.

THINK TANK PROGRAM:

Dr. Judith Shamian, President of the Canadian Nurses Association and Dr. Susan VanDeVelde-Coke, President of the Academy of Canadian Nurse Executives, opened the day with remarks welcoming nursing and healthcare leaders. The timeliness and the importance of this work to quality healthcare in Canada were supported by both organizations. They reflected on the achievements of past nurse leaders and the fertile ground for moving this work forward.

Diane Doran, Scientific Director of the Nursing Health Services Research Unit of the Lawrence S. Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing - University of Toronto presented the findings of a review of published and grey literature, as well as key informant interviews on outcomes monitoring initiatives in nursing. Through the Knowledge Synthesis, Diane identified the types of nurse sensitive indicators currently being measured through national reporting systems, described different uses of nursing report cards and identified limitations, as well as providing recommendations for a National Report Card in Nursing for Canada.

Dr. Norma Lang, Wisconsin Regent Distinguished Professor, Aurora Professor of Healthcare Quality and Informatics of the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee College of Nursing, made a presentation titled *Strategy for Implementation – Nationally, Regionally and Locally*. She shared her experience and learning from her work in both the development of nursing sensitive indicators and the implementation of them. She identified the vision and the challenges of creating intelligent electronic information systems that work equally well for the entire nurse continuum.

In her presentation entitled *Unlocking the Clinical Value of Health Information Systems: the role for Nursing Leaders* Maureen Charlebois, Chief Nursing Executive and Group Director, Clinical Adoption of Canada Health Infoway (CHI) described the EHRs Blueprint (an interoperable technology framework) and how it allows for the securely and appropriate sharing of health information across Canada. Through the use of this framework, she explained that Canadians will benefit from the modernization of their healthcare system, Clinicians will experience clinical value and ultimately the economy will benefit.

Dr. Kathryn Hannah, Health Informatics Advisor for the Canadian Nurses Association discussed the data available through her presentation of Canadian Health Outcomes for Better Information and Care (C-HOBIC). She explained that C-HOBIC builds on the Ontario HOBIC (Health Outcomes for Better Information and Care) program and introduces a systematic, structured language to admission and discharge assessments of patients receiving acute care, complex continuing care, long-term care or home care. The information delivered by C-HOBIC, helps to improve health system planning; resource allocation; and performance measurement and research.

Through her presentation, Dr. Chantal Backman, Project Lead of the Canadian Collaborative for Excellence in Healthcare Quality (CEHQ) identified the objectives of the initiative: (a) to attain higher performance levels in quality of care through collaboration; and (b) to raise the bar in achieving excellence in Academic Health Sciences Centres in Canada. Over the three year term of the project, 11 Academic Health Science Centres across Canada have agreed to work collaboratively to improve the quality of health care.

Dr. Indra Pulcins, Director, Indicators and Performance Measurement of the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) examined health indicators in her presentation and described the Canadian Hospital Reporting Project (CHRP) - a new national quality improvement tool being developed by CIHI for acute care hospitals that is currently being piloted in hospitals across Canada.

In addition, a structured process was utilized to engage participants in prioritizing a preliminary set of structure, process, and outcome indicators, representing a composite of the most frequently used indicators from the research, CIHI, HOBIC and international sources.

THINK TANK RESULTS:

The “Report Card” was envisioned to include a selected minimum set of data on structure, process and outcome indicators that could be collected nationally (initially using pilot sites) and benchmarked. It was agreed that in the future, such a report card would be used to examine relationships between the resources that are deployed to support nursing services and the outcomes. This would inform policy directions for nursing services in all care settings. The criteria to choose the indicators included being evidence-based, meaningful, feasible and actionable.

The deliverables that were set out prior to the Think Tank were successfully achieved – beginning consensus on a minimum number of indicators to track in a nursing report card and a draft critical path of milestones to move this initiative forward. It was determined that follow up meetings of key stakeholders would be held to delineate the key learning's from the Think Tank and to cultivate the critical path for the development of the national report card for nursing.

KEY STAKEHOLDER FOLLOW-UP MEETING

The first of these follow up meetings was held on March 24th in Toronto where the Planning Committee, along with other stakeholders and researchers met to discuss the next steps of the “Report Card”. This group has evolved to become the Steering Committee for the development phase of the indicators and continues to be co-chaired by ACEN and CNA.

The objectives of this follow-up meeting were to review the outcomes of the Think Tank; to align and synergize with key stakeholders activities; and to create an action plan for a way forward for the development of national nursing indicators including funding and governance structure. These deliverables were accomplished through first reaching clarity for the following questions:

1. **WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACHIEVE?** Driving accountability for quality nursing care in Canada through a report card on nursing. Through this collection of information, health care organizations would be able to obtain performance feedback and show provincial, territorial and national trends. We would begin by focusing on a few nurse-sensitive indicators that are currently being collected across different sectors. Over time, additional indicators would be added. Starting small will allow the committee to monitor quality and to showcase the contribution of nursing - to drive the quality agenda through nursing. It is important to extract the information and make it visible. Nursing is serious about the quality agenda of Canada and approaches it from a patient care perspective.
2. **WHY ARE WE EMBARKING ON THIS WORK?** Several jurisdictions in the world have embarked on similar initiatives in order to demonstrate and understand the contribution of nursing to the quality of care. We want to build on the experience of others and create visibility of nursing work on patient outcomes. We also want nursing and nurse executives to be able to be accountable for particularly those aspects of quality care that are sensitive to nursing by increasing our evidence base. We want to clearly delineate the relationship between nursing inputs, nursing process and patient outcome variables.
3. **FOR WHOM?** The initiative will be primarily directed to the Nurse Executive at the organizational level, to assist nurse leaders across the country with decision-making that impacts on quality of care. Organizational level reports can then be scaled up to sector specific reports, and reports for the province, territory and country. Researchers and provincial, territorial and national nursing organizations can utilize the report card for research and policy based agendas.

The rest of the meeting was spent determining the following:

- i. Leveraging Partnerships – Who is doing what and how can we align and synergize?
 - o All partners currently involved will still be needed for dialogue, advice and support. Some additional partners may also be needed.
- ii. Potential Nurse Indicators
 - o Further discussion did not result in conclusions on the indicators. It was decided that that further clarification of indicators will be made based on evidence from the literature, perhaps looking into some more specialized areas, or evidence from pilot projects expressly for this work.
- iii. Confirming the Critical Path
 - o The Steering Committee hopes to solicit input and mobilize the nursing leadership community to shape the creation of the national nursing indicators, and to ensure that they are used to maximum advantage – to enhance quality and safety of patients
Soliciting input might include:
 - Articulate vision for this work, identify clearly its philosophy, purpose and parameters.
 - Share it widely in Canada and seek dialogue, develop consensus under the guidance of the steering committee.
 - Seek research partnerships that will support further identification of the development of the indicators we want and possibly the development of indicators that don't yet exist.
 - Pilot sites will be solicited across the country to refine the selected indicators and data collection methods with the predicted launch date for the nursing report card being April 2012.
 - Determine further steps in the critical path for promotion, support and development
- iv. Funding
 - o Initial support will be sought from Health Canada to write the prospectus for funding.
 - o Other funding will be sought based on the exploration of partnerships
- v. Governance structure/project oversight/accountability
 - o In addition to the steering committee, leaders were identified for the research elements of the project who can report to the steering committee and guide the development of research partnerships critical to its success. The research partnership leaders will be Dr. Diane Doran representing the academic/research enterprise and Dr. Karima Velji representing the executive leadership/decision-maker perspective. Both of these committees will have, as much as possible, regional representation from across the country.
 - o The Steering and Project Committees will continue to meet to finalize the governance structure for this project and the critical path.

NEXT STEPS

Karima Velji and Nora Hammell agreed to provide a summary of the two meetings that can be shared with Think Tank participants. Karima committed ACEN to reconvening the steering committee so that all members could share in starting to develop the governance structure and take the necessary steps to explore research and other partnerships.

All participants were thanked for their expertise and involvement. The group expressed appreciation to Health Canada for having the vision to support this initiative because of its potential to promote quality care. Great optimism and energy had created a growing momentum throughout the day in the belief that patient care in the Canadian healthcare system will benefit from these efforts within a few short years.

STEERING COMMITTEE

Co-Chair - Dr. Susan VanDeVelde-Coke, Academy of Canadian Executive Nurses

Co-Chair - Anne Sutherland-Boal, Canadian Nurses Association

Maureen Charlebois, Canada Health Info-way

Dr. Sean Clarke, Lawrence S. Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing

Dr. Diane Doran, Nursing Health Services Research Unit

Barbara Foster, Office of Nursing Policy, Health Canada

Lisa Freeman, Collaborating for Excellence in Healthcare Quality

Nora Hammell, Canadian Nurses Association

Dr. Kathryn Hannah, Canadian Nurses Association

Sandra MacDonald-Rencz, Office of Nursing Policy, Health Canada

Dr. Linda McGillis Hall, Lawrence S. Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing

Patricia O'Connor, Academy of Canadian Executive Nurses

Dr. Karima Velji, Academy of Canadian Executive Nurses

The Steering Committee would like to acknowledge and thank Health Canada for the funding received that made the *Think Tank: Towards a National Report Card for Nursing* event and follow up meeting possible.