

Practical Nurse Bridge Course to the LPN Certificate of Completion offered to Veteran Students

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GateWay Community College currently offers a bridge course for Veteran students who achieved a credential as a medic, corpsman, or similar designation through their military education. Refresher students who hold a temporary LPN license are also eligible for placement in this Bridge Course.

A statewide team of educators reviewed the National Council State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) gap analysis and the NUR150 Practical Nurse Bridge Course was created. The Bridge Course curriculum is based on the knowledge, skills, and abilities identified as being deficient in the gap analysis and prepares Veteran graduates for the NCLEX-PN. Students in the Bridge Program meet with nursing advisors and are presented with options to apply for advanced placement into the RN program and the Concurrent Enrollment Program (concurrent BSN coursework) at the midpoint start of Block 3.

As the gap analysis indicated, there was a curricular difference between the various branches of service. With that in mind, the Bridge Course curriculum was created to accommodate all levels of student knowledge as identified in the gap analysis. The greatest need exists at the fundamental levels and the faculty team at GWCC seek to assess the various skill levels and challenge each student to achieve his or her highest potential. After five successful groups, the Bridge Course remains a work in progress with assessment and revisions occurring after every cohort based on student and faculty feedback.

The Bridge Course is a rigorous, 15-week certificate of completion program consisting of 12 credits. Five cohorts of students have entered the Bridge Course and many have gone on to enter Block 3 of the RN program. Four of the graduates who moved into the RN program also entered the concurrent enrollment program (CEP), earning the Associate of Applied Science in Nursing degree from Maricopa as well as earning a Bachelor's of Science in Nursing degree from a university partner. GWCC looks forward to assisting more of our Veteran students as they move toward achieving their goals in nursing.

Veteran's/LPN Bridge Course

8 didactic credits (120 hours); 4 lab/simulation/clinical/Pharm/IV credits (180 hours)

Total of 12 credits/300 clock hours

Course Description:

Designed to bridge previously gained healthcare knowledge, skills, and abilities of the military Veteran student to the role of the practical nurse. Course includes didactic, laboratory, and clinical experiences for practical nursing including concepts and theories related to care of geriatric, adult, pediatric, and childbearing clients. Areas of didactic and clinical focus include: role of the practical nurse collaborating with other members of the healthcare team; concepts of health promotion and disease/illness prevention; therapeutic communication techniques; nutritional concepts; medication administration to include pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics of medications, nursing considerations in medication administration, and dosage calculation; anatomy and physiology and pathophysiologic concepts, documentation and concepts related to information technology. Emphasis in clinical practicum is on nursing care of pediatric and child-bearing families, and older adult residents of long term care facilities with selected alterations in health; concepts of delegation, prioritization and management of care for the practical nurse is integrated.

Need statement:

Under House Bill 2076, passed February 2013, this course meets the “bridge course” requirement for a Veteran, who has completed a military program of basic medical training and was awarded a military occupational specialty. Based on analysis of military education (National Council of State Boards of Nursing, 2013), military specialist program graduates received some, but not all, the education and skills equivalent to a licensed practical nurse. This course meets the Arizona State Board of Nursing requirements for a “bridge course” to fill the gaps between the Veteran’s military education and experience and license practical nursing educational requirements.

Purpose statement:

Develop a statewide bridge course/pathway based on the gap analysis for the military veteran trained in the medical field to articulate into a practical nursing bridge course and continue on the pathway to an associate degree in nursing, a bachelor’s degree in nursing, and beyond.

Eligibility:

A person who has completed military health care training to include but not limited to: Basic Medical Technician Corpsman Program (Navy and Air Force), Air Force Independent Duty Medical Technician, Army Health Care Specialist.

Course Competencies

- 1) Identify differences between current military healthcare role and practical nursing.
- 2) Demonstrate therapeutic communication skills and caring behaviors to clients and their families across the lifespan.
- 3) Demonstrate critical thinking skills and problem-solving to provide holistic nursing care to clients.
- 4) Identify types, classifications, pharmacokinetics, and pharmacodynamic properties of selected drugs.
- 5) Apply principles of safe medication administration for childbearing, pediatric, adult, and geriatric clients.
- 6) Perform data collection techniques for childbearing, pediatric, adult, and geriatric clients.

- 7) Implement the established plan of care for childbearing, pediatric, adult, and geriatric clients.
- 8) Apply anatomy and physiology, and pathophysiologic concepts to the care of clients with selected health alterations across the lifespan.
- 9) Apply integrated nutritional concepts that support health promotion and disease prevention to clients across the lifespan.
- 10) Identify developmental stages and transitions for adult, child-bearing, pediatric, and geriatric clients.
- 11) Demonstrate safe techniques and competent care in providing interventions for clients receiving intravenous therapy.
- 12) Calculate medication dosages safely and accurately.
- 13) Practice within the regulatory, legal and ethical frameworks of practical nursing.
- 14) Demonstrate safe performance of selected clinical skills/procedures.
- 15) Communicate significant client findings and events to the registered nurse and other members of the healthcare team.
- 16) Demonstrate culturally sensitive care.
- 17) Describe the role of the practical nurse in the management of a group of clients under the direction of a registered nurse using time management, interpersonal communication, delegation and organizational skills.
- 18) Apply elements of technology and information management to document and report client findings and conditions.
- 19) Demonstrate safe and competent care in providing nursing interventions for clients across the lifespan.
- 20) Identify various healthcare roles that are part of the healthcare team and differentiate the LPN role as defined by the Arizona State Board of Nursing.

Course Outline – Recommended sequencing of content; final content sequencing to be determined by instructional faculty.

- I. Critical Thinking
 - A. Nursing Process
 - B. Data Collection
 1. Components of a Health History
 2. Full vs. Focused Assessment
 - C. Planning
 - D. Implementation
 - E. Evaluation
 - F. Documentation
 1. Electronic Medical Record
 - G. Caring for the Pediatric/Adult/Geriatric and Childbearing Patient
 1. Therapeutic Communication
- II. Role Development
 - A. Role transition from Veteran healthcare worker to the role of the Practical Nurse
 - B. Collaboration within the Health Care Team
 1. Communication
 2. Conflict Resolution
 3. Delegation
 4. Role in Patient Education and Discharge Planning
 - C. Scope of Practice
 1. Standards of Practice for the Practical Nurse
 2. State Nurse Practice Act

3. Agency Specific Guidelines
- D. Legal and Ethical Considerations in Patient Care
- E. Licensure Process
 1. National Council Licensure Examination
 2. State Board of Nursing
- F. Transition into Employment Sector
 1. Professional appearance
 2. Professional communication
 3. Resumes
 4. Interview skills

III. Holism

- A. Religious and Spiritual Considerations
- B. Cultural Considerations
- C. Developmental Life Span Considerations
 1. Stages of Growth and Development for Pediatric/Adult/Geriatric and Childbearing Patients
- D. Health Promotion and Disease Prevention for Pediatric/Adult/Geriatric and Childbearing Patients

IV. Safe Nursing Practice

- A. Nursing Care of Adult/Geriatric/Pediatric Patients with Select Alterations in Health, Anatomy/Physiology/Pathophysiology, Applicable Laboratory and Diagnostic Examinations, Medical Management, Nursing Process, Pharmacokinetics and Pharmacodynamics of Applicable Medication Classifications
 1. Disorders of the Cardiovascular and Peripheral Vascular System
 2. Disorders of the Respiratory System
 3. Disorders of the Gastrointestinal System
 4. Disorders of the Endocrine System
 5. Disorders of the Immune System
 6. Disorders of the Integumentary System
 7. Disorders of the Hematologic and Lymphatic System
 8. Disorders of the Reproductive System
 9. Disorders of the Musculoskeletal System
 10. Disorders of the Genitourinary System
 11. Disorders of the Neurologic System
 12. Fluid/Electrolyte and Acid/Base Imbalances
 13. Cancer
 14. Mental Health Disorders
 - a. Behavior Management
 - b. Crisis Intervention
 15. Surgical Patient
 - a. Preoperative
 - b. Intraoperative
 - c. Postoperative
- B. Nursing care of the Antepartum Patient and Family
- C. Nursing Care of the Intrapartum Patient and Family
- D. Nursing Care of the Postpartum Patient and Family
- E. Nursing Care of the Neonate

V. Selected Clinical Skills/Therapeutic Procedures

- A. Assisting with Activities of Daily Living
 1. Feeding
 2. Dressing
 3. Bathing
 4. Positioning

5. Ambulating and Transferring Patients
6. Toileting
7. Grooming
- B. Vital Signs
- C. Internal and External Disaster Planning
- D. Handling Hazardous and Infectious Materials
- E. Ergonomic Principles
- F. Use of Restraint and Safety Devices
- G. Admission/Transfer/Discharge Procedures
- H. Wound Care
- I. Heat/Cold Therapy
- J. Oxygen Therapy
- K. Urinary Catheter
- L. Ostomy
- M. Nasogastric/Feeding Tube
- N. Chest Tube
- O. Care of the Patient Receiving a Blood Transfusion
- P. Tracheostomy
- Q. Electrocardiogram/Cardiac Monitoring
- R. Wound Care
- S. Medication Administration
 1. Medication Orders
 2. Drug Preparations
 3. Dosage Calculations
 4. Preparation of Medications
 5. Medication Administration Methods
 6. Documentation
- T. Intravenous Infusion Therapy/Venipuncture
 1. Scope of the Practical Nurse
 - a. Arizona State Board of Nursing
 - b. Legal Implications
 - c. Documentation
 2. Blood Collection
 3. Principles of IV Therapy
 - a. Routine Care and Maintenance
 - b. Catheter Site Care
 - c. Flushing with Saline or Heparinized Saline
 - d. Client Evaluation
 - e. Equipment
 4. Complications/Adverse Reactions
 - a. Local
 - b. Mechanical
 - c. Systemic
 5. Insertion of Peripheral-Short IV Catheters
 6. Discontinuation of Peripheral IV Catheters
 - a. Peripheral-Short
 - b. Peripheral Midline
 7. Pharmacokinetics/Pharmacodynamics for Select IV Fluids and Medications
 - a. Hypo-/Iso-/Hypertonic Solutions
 - b. Premixed/Admixture Medications
 8. Dosage Calculations/Regulating Rates
 9. Administration of Select Intravenous Solutions
 - a. Un-medicated Solutions
 - b. Premixed/Admixed Medications

- 10. Care and Maintenance of Central Line
- U. Clinical Skills/Therapeutic Procedures for the Child-Bearing Client/Family/Neonate
 - 1. Data Collection
 - 2. Use of Isolette/Warmer
- V. Clinical Skills/Therapeutic Procedures for the Pediatric Client
 - 1. Data Collection
 - 2. Medication Administration

Suggested Lab and clinical hours:

40 hours long term care/acute care

25 hours pediatric

25 hours OB

45 hours lab/simulation

45 hours for IV/Pharm