

OKLAHOMA BOARD OF NURSING GUIDANCE FOR OKLAHOMA NURSING EDUCATION PROGRAMS

UPDATE ON COVID-19

What can nursing education programs focus on regarding course/clinical objectives during the pandemic?

Program administrators and nursing faculty should use their professional judgment in planning and scheduling instructional experiences for nursing students. While it is important that educational experiences be conducted in a way that allows nursing students to meet course/clinical objectives and to continue work toward achievement of program outcomes, patient, student and faculty safety should be at the forefront of decision-making.

How can nursing education programs allow for utilization of distance learning as well as virtual/simulated experiences to temporarily conduct theory and clinical instruction?

Several nursing programs have already converted to distance learning for didactic course work with virtual/simulated learning for their clinical instruction under consideration. While this may not be ideal and certainly requires development of some innovative strategies, it may be the only option to continue nursing course work at this time.

Distance learning activities can provide theory instruction for students. Alternate virtual and simulated clinical experiences can be utilized to conduct clinical learning experiences. Faculty should keep in mind that learning experiences should be designed to meet course and clinical objectives. Written clinical assignments may also be considered if designed in a manner to meet clinical objectives. We are very fortunate that our rules do not require a specific number of clinical hours; only that experiences are sufficient to meet course and clinical objectives.

Utilization of comprehensive theory/clinical assignments that students can complete outside of school/at home may be utilized as well.

Are nursing education programs required to submit to the Board of Nursing documentation prior to implementation of temporarily deployed distance learning/alternate clinical experiences?

No. Approval prior to implementation is not required. Should any of the instructional changes be considered for permanent delivery of content/conduction of clinical experiences, then approval by the Board of Nursing will be required.

What if the University, College, or Technology Center decides to temporarily close?

Each nursing program should develop an instructional plan/adapted course schedule that would outline how students would finish course work and complete clinical requirements. There may be an option for nursing programs to continue virtual instruction for nursing students, if approved by the University, College or Technology Center.

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR OKLAHOMA NURSING EDUCATION PROGRAMS

NCLEX Testing in Oklahoma

NCLEX Examinations Testing Will Resume in Limited Capacity

On March 25, 2020, NCLEX-RN and NCLEX-PN Examinations testing resumed on a limited basis at 61 Pearson VUE Testing Centers, with no reported issues. In Oklahoma, a testing site is open in Oklahoma City. The number of operational testing centers that will be available is increasing every day. There are plans for the Norman and Tulsa sites to reopen in April.

Adhering to CDC guidelines for social distancing, candidates will be screened prior to being allowed to test, and testing center personnel will also undergo screening before being allowed to work. In addition, testing centers will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected between each test taker including all objects that candidates interact with or encounter.

The time limit of the exam will be shortened to four hours in order to allow the maximum number of candidates to test per day, and the pretest items and the special experimental Next Generation NCLEX section will be removed. However, the psychometric integrity of the NCLEX exams will be maintained as well as the difficulty levels and passing standards of the exam. As of noon CT on March 25, it had been determined that the shortened exam is psychometrically sound and performing as expected to measure candidate ability.

Pearson Vue had closed their testing centers beginning March 16, 2020 for at least 30 days until April 16, or whenever conditions were deemed safe to re-open. NCLEX candidates should continue to visit the <https://www.ncsbn.org/14428.htm> for the most updated information. Pearson VUE previously contacted all candidates who had a test appointment scheduled between March 17-April 16, 2020. This message informed candidates that Pearson VUE unscheduled their appointment and would extend their Authorization to Test (ATT) for 6 months.

The Oklahoma Board of Nursing will continue to process new applications and approve candidates who are eligible.

Coronavirus Resource at the Oklahoma State Department of Health can be accessed at <https://coronavirus.health.ok.gov/>

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) has also issued documentation and findings from the White House Coronavirus Task Force that can be accessed at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing has also issued recommendations to be considered. The recommendations can be accessed at https://www.aacnnursing.org/News-Information/COVID-19/AACN-Recommendations?utm_source=MagnetMail&utm