

**Employer Strategies Work Group  
Meeting Minutes  
October 26, 2006, 1:00 - 4:00 pm  
Aurora Health Care Corporate Center, Milwaukee, WI**

Meeting Attendees: Sally Lundeen, Sue Dean-Baar, Jo Ann Appleyard, Jess Roberts, Denice Dorpat, Sue Hughes, Bob Herdrich, Joan Jacobsen, Lowine Sarbacker

- I. Call to order/review of minutes from July 24<sup>th</sup> meeting
  - a. The meeting was called to order at 1:20 by Jo Ann Appleyard
  - b. The minutes from the July 24<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved.
  
- II. SWIFT Nurse Educator program updates and related discussion:
  - a. Sponsoring employers: A roster of actual and potential employer sponsors was distributed. Most of the committed employers have candidates in the admissions process at UW-Milwaukee, UW-Madison, and UW-Oshkosh.
    - i. A letter was sent out to targeted healthcare employers in August 2006 (letter and list of targeted employers included as a handout).
      1. The employer list mainly consists of large health care employers. There are no small employers who have agreed to sponsor candidates, although several inquired about the program after letters were sent out to members of the Wisconsin Rural Health Cooperative in the spring of this year.
        - a. We will need to work on some strategies to get these employers to cooperatively support candidates.
        - b. There was a suggestion to work with Sheryl Peterson of the Wisconsin Rural Health Cooperative. Sue Hughes will email Jo Ann with her contact information.
      2. There was a suggestion to contact St. Joseph's Hospital in West Bend.
  - b. Grant timeline: We have revised our timeline of key project activities, and all changes have been accepted by the Department of Labor. The grant officially ends on July 1, 2007. However, we were told that a 12-month no-cost extension will likely be granted. We will apply for the extension in spring 2007.
  - c. Candidate update:

- i. Health Professional Education Certificate (HPEC) candidates
  - 1. There are currently 17 students in this certificate program.
  - 2. Fourteen will be finished in May 2007, and the other 3 will have one or two more courses to take before they are finished.
  - 3. Some of these candidates have already begun to teach in a Technical College.
- ii. SWIFT candidate admissions to UW Program
  - 1. A Candidate Summary sheet that was distributed.
  - 2. It appears that we will have around 15 people enrolled by January, plus the 10 students in the Wheaton Franciscan pilot cohort that began their graduate studies in fall, 2005.
  - 3. The balance of the SWIFT admissions will take place in subsequent admissions cycles (summer/fall, 2007, spring, 2008, and summer/fall 2008).
    - a. Milwaukee and Eau Claire both have summer admissions. They would need to be admitted to the program by March in order to start in the summer.
- d. Report from Educator Strategies Work Group meeting on September 21, 2006
  - i. Every campus has identified an advisor to help candidates get through the admission process. The advisors have been also meeting via conference call in order to make sure that all schools are consistent in their approach to SWIFT candidates.
  - ii. The Educators group has been working on how to handle the situations when candidates want to go into a nurse practitioner (NP) program. This creates an issue because the NP programs don't have educator courses incorporated into them. Since it was decided that all SWIFT candidates will take a minimum of 6 credits in education course, those candidates in NP programs will have to take an additional course load. We are working with a consultant from Alverno College who is helping us with determining how prior experience may be substituted for additional education courses. One way to do this is to assist students in assembling a portfolio to demonstrate their competencies in education.
  - iii. The group has identified four key educational competencies SWIFT nurse must achieve:
    - 1. Planning and managing learning.
    - 2. Constructing curricular elements.
    - 3. Designing and implementing assessment strategies.
    - 4. Demonstrating effectiveness in educational performance for selected populations.
  - iv. The Educational Strategies group is also working on streamlining the employment of SWIFT nurses in the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) by submitting selected education courses

from the UW system for review as substitutes for some of the required courses for WTCS instructor certification .

1. Instructors employed by the WTCS have 5 years to complete 7 courses required for certification.
  2. The outcome will more than likely be that SWIFT nurses will have met *some* of the WTCS requirements, but not ALL of them.
- v. The next topic that this work group will examine is how to engage others in the educational community to connect with employers regarding the development of joint appointments.
1. At Meriter, they are not allowing a joint-appointment, only adjunct faculty. This has been a deterrent for candidates who are interested because they would rather have the joint-appointment. This has been a source for some to no longer be interested.
  2. It was recommended that we hold a joint meeting between the Educational Strategies and the Employer Strategies Work Groups when we get closer to graduating the first group of students from the program.
- e. Report from Steering Committee meeting October 24, 2006:
- i. The primary focus of the discussion was related to the relationship between the SWIFT candidates and the Workforce Development Boards (WDBs). There are 11 regions across the state of these WDBs, but for the purposes of the SWIFT project, we are developing a work group with the four Boards that represent the geographic regions of the 4 UW programs.
    1. It was identified that the WDBs could assist with:
      - a. Identifying additional potential employer sponsors throughout the state.
      - b. Working with employers to identify minority candidates to participate in SWIFT.
      - c. Assist with a database for tracking individuals over time. The WDBs have a lot of experience with this sort of thing because of the work that they do every day.
      - d. Facilitating the mentoring of candidates.
      - e. Provide matching funds for assisting candidates with things like tuition, child care, etc.
    2. Dick Best from the West Central WDB, and Dave Wilson, from the Milwaukee WDB, are both members of the Steering Committee, and they are taking the lead in involving the other WDBs.
  - ii. The committee discussed how to identify other employer supporters and minority candidates and recruit them into SWIFT, specifically how to structure mechanisms that encourage and support minority candidates without discouraging others?

- III. Review of sample employee agreement:
  - a. A sample agreement was distributed as part of the handouts.
  - b. If anyone is interested in getting an electronic version of this agreement, Jess or Jo Ann can email it.
  - c. It is not required to be set up like the sample, this is just a guideline for those looking for guidance on where to start.
  
- IV. Database for SWIFT Candidates:
  - a. In order to evaluate the program, we need to have demographic information about the candidates and we can track their progress through their education programs.
  - b. Suggested data points include:
    - i. Demographic data of those that are currently in school.
    - ii. We may also need to know who interested candidates are and some demographic information on them.
      - 1. It will be very helpful for the employers to keep track of those employees that initially were interested but for some reason decided against pursuing.
      - 2. Maybe if we can show that there is “pent up” demand, we can show that the state loan forgiveness program is in need of additional funding.
  - c. There was discussion of mechanisms to communicate relevant candidate information.
  - d. We will also try to capture what the SWIFT candidates are experiencing as they progress through their education programs using survey technology.
    - i. There has been candidate resistance to the idea of going back to school full time. Some, on the other hand, have been interested because of the incentive with the tuition assistance and the paid time off. We may want to assess to what extent candidates are interested in the program because they want a “fast-track” to their master’s degree, not because they particularly want to be nurse educators.
    - ii. It may be helpful for to set up discussion groups online so that SWIFT students can have contact with each other to discuss mutual issues related to their going to school full-time while trying to work and balance their personal lives. It has been the experience at UWM that this connection is very helpful for online students from many different locations.
  
- V. Strategies of enlisting additional employer sponsors
  - a. It will be helpful for current SWIFT employers to encourage other employers to consider becoming sponsors.
  - b. The current focus is on long-term care organizations and the VA Hospitals, but thus far, none of these have agreed to become SWIFT sponsors.

- i. Joan Jacobsen will contact her colleagues at the VA to ask them consider becoming involved.
    - 1. We will then follow up with letters and telephone calls.
    - 2. It was suggested that we could also look at recruiting correctional nurses
  
- VI. Strategies for recruiting minority candidates
  - a. Some of the larger systems have opened up recruitment within their other sub-systems, such as long-term care.
  - b. There is a great deal of potential in our relationships with the technical college nursing programs in order to identify potential candidates that could move right into a SWIFT program after receiving their ADN degrees. Such candidates could be encouraged to work for employers who are SWIFT sponsors.
    - i. This is believed to be a great idea for identifying candidates because employers are just recruiting from the pool of employees that they currently have.
  
- VII. The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm. The next meeting will be held in February 2007, date, time and place to be announced at a later date.