Planning the Nursing Education Research Network

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**Abstract:**

The clarion call to transform nursing education (IOM, 2010) presents immense challenges and opportunities for schools of nursing across the U.S. Confronted by severe faculty shortages, inadequate clinical placement opportunities, and outdated pedagogies, nursing education must be transformed to abate current challenges and to prepare a nursing workforce that meets the size and competencies required by a reformed health care system. To this end, academic nursing must design, implement, test, and disseminate new structures and strategies. Unfortunately, the science of nursing education remains in its infancy. The small body of research that exists is constrained by insufficient funding, which contributed to small sample, single-site studies, has inadequately developed and tested outcome measures, and limited analysis techniques. To develop the database and research capacity to generate sound evidence for guiding the transformation of academic nursing, this planning grant will be used to develop a collaborative, national Nursing Education Research Network. Designed in part to sustain the mission of RWJF’s Evaluating Innovations in Nursing Education program, the Network will provide an efficient mechanism for collecting annual data from member schools that can be analyzed by Network staff and made available to members for their own analyses via a secure Web portal. Although member schools will determine the most crucial research problems to be explored, this network will have the potential to employ powerful longitudinal designs to investigate important curricular, instructional, and policy-related questions over time. Further, the data may support quality improvement efforts, strategic planning, and faculty staffing plans for individual schools.