

CHN Certification Sponsorship: A Multifaceted Strategy for Building Leadership Capacity

Presented

by

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Purpose of Session

The describe the pilot project of a CHN certification initiative designed to build leadership capacity within the provincial context.

Background of Initiative

- Issues facing CHNA Alberta
 - Member recruitment
 - Multiple agendas
 - Board fatigue
 - Board succession
 - Limited resources
 - Need to increase member engagement

Change in Strategic Direction

- Commitment to “special projects”
 - Decision to maintain general operations, with an emphasis on vetted special projects
 - Call for board members to submit project proposals for approval
 - General board interest in promoting certification within the province as a priority

Selection of Certification Focus

- Congruence of project with CHNAlberta's Vision, Mission, and Goals
 - Recognition of unique CHN contributions
 - Enhancement of CHN profile
 - Advancement of CHN knowledge, skills, and expertise
 - Contribution to creation of CHN community-of-practice
- Potential benefits to CHNAlberta, members, community, and province

Certification Project: 2014, 2015, and 2016

➤ Focus:

- Financial sponsorship of CHN Alberta members to write the CNA Certification Exam for CHN
- Networking support for exam preparation

➤ Projected Outcomes:

- Increased number of certified CHNs
- Increased profile of CHN certification
- Increased vitality within CHN Alberta in terms of membership, leadership, mentorship, board involvement, and/or related activities

➤ Targets: 18 CHNA members

Focus, Activities, & Timeline

- Development of materials (January – April 2014)
- Marketing
- Application submissions
- Application management, selection, and notification
- Networking support
- Exam
- Evaluation
- Results and reimbursement
- Follow-up

Application Form

- General Applicant Information
- Nursing Background
 - Year of Graduation
 - Years in CHN
 - Current Employer, Position, and Focus
- Individual Responses
 - Years as a member of CHNAlberta?
 - Involvement in CHNAlberta in those years?
 - Reasons for wanting to write exam?
 - Intentions to “pay it forward” in terms of CHNAlberta work and/or support of certification?

Selection of Applicants

➤ Criteria:

- Years in CHN
- Years and involvement in CHNAlberta
- Reasons for writing certification exam
- Plans for “paying-it-forward”

➤ Process:

- Ranking of the applications by 3 Board members
- Meeting of Sub-Committee for discussion
- Selection of pilot cohort of 8 applicants
- Notification to all applicants

Applicant Cohort (n = 18 over 3 years)

- Are from all over Alberta
- Have 4 to 10 years of CHN experience
- Work in public health, school health, nursing education.
- Have been CHNA Alberta members from 0 to 5 years
- Have been involved in CHNA Alberta- Two applicants are now on CHNA Alberta board

Certification Outcomes

- Increased knowledge that is comprehensive and current
- New attitudes and new perspectives
- Improved mentoring and leadership
- Role model for other nurses
- Enhanced credibility
- Stronger nursing practice
- Better health promotion and disease prevention strategies



Applicant Cohort (n = 18)

- Suggest “pay-it-forward” strategies such as:
 - Joining the CHNAlberta Board
 - Leading presentations about certification
 - Working on projects with CHNAlberta
 - Mentoring colleagues in certification study groups
 - Being a speaker in webinars and workshops
 - Recruiting new members for CHNAlberta
 - Conducting sessions on certification
 - Promoting certification by developing study groups within the employment setting
 - Developing certification information for newsletters

Exam Support: Meeting Space

- Ongoing use of ReadyTalk teleconference- met approximately once every two weeks.
- Used Google Docs to share a study/work plan

Exam Support: Study Group and Consultation

➤ Study Group

- Set meeting dates from 4 months before the exam
- Participants chose competencies to focus their learning and then presented the information to the other participants, emailing notes prior to meeting.
- Used each other's areas of expertise to fill in gaps in knowledge
- Posted articles and resources

Cohort Evaluation (cont)

- Recommendations for Change
 - More direction re areas to study
 - More support from certified nurses
 - More help with home health content
 - Advise applicants to start 6 months prior to exam

Evaluation of Costs

- People (Team of 6 Board Members)
 - Development of materials
 - Application processing
 - Communication with applicants via email, webinar, and study group
- Budget for 2015
 - Ready Talk for study group from January 2015 to April 2015- unable to break down exact costs, estimated at \$600.00
 - Exam fees = \$4293.00
 - Total for annual project = \$4893.00

Potential Benefits

- To individual CHNs
- To CHNAlberta
- To CHNs in Alberta/Canada
- To CHN practice
- To clients
- To employers
- To the community/population groups
- To the our CHN profile

Participant Voices: The Last Word

- *“I believe that the sponsorship made a big difference in my and my study team’s confidence going into the examination. Even if some don’t pass, the process and group study was well worth the effort. It is a bonus that we might have our exam fees reimbursed, but the other aspects of the sponsorship were the ones with the highest value.”*
- *“I do believe that it will encourage others to become certified knowing that there is a group behind them and encouraging them.”*
- *“I have gained insight into my role as a nurse working in a community setting. My nursing practice has improved.”*
- *“The experience was absolutely invigorating!
What a sense of pride in being CHNs.”*

Questions? Comments? Feedback?

