What are the Facilitators & Barriers for AD RNs?

Objectives
By the end of this learning session, participants will:
- describe top facilitators for RNs’ progression to BS education
- describe top barriers for RNs progression to BS education
- summarize interventions to help ensure AD RNs’ progression to BS education

Significance
- Better Outcomes with Greater % BS RNs
  - Patients, families, and society
  - Profession
  - Nurses themselves
Background

- 50% US RNs presently hold BS
- Strong National Movement to increase % BS prepared
  - IOM (2011) increase to 80% by 2020
- Employers prefer/require

Purpose

Identify AD RNs’ perceived barriers and facilitators to progression on to baccalaureate level nursing education

- Current RNs' First Degree as a Nurse (HSRA, 2010)
  - 45% AD
  - 35% BS or higher
- New RNs in the US now (RWJF, 2013)
  - AD: 53% new RNs
  - BS: 43% New RNs
- Just 21% of AD RNs progress to BS
  - average of 7.5 years after graduating with AD (HRSA, 2010)
- Why do some AD RNs go on for BS education, while many more do not?
Gap in the Literature

- Few studies on Barriers and Facilitators-only 3 recent studies of relevance
- Most purely qualitative
- With lack of research on barriers/facilitators it is difficult to know how effective present strategies will be

Methods

- IRB approved, used informed consent
- Convenience sample (n=82) of AD RNs
  - One public university
  - One private university
- E-mail invitation to complete survey
- Mixed Methods: Qualitative and quantitative data were collected on perceived facilitators and barriers

Perceived Facilitators & Barriers Instrument

- First developed for use with pharmacists-continuing education (Hanson & DeMuth, 1991)
- Developed & tested by expert panel & refined in later study
- Permission to use & modify
- Expert & content validity determined by 3 nursing education experts & 2 statisticians
## Constructs
- 23 Facilitator questions
- 31 Barrier Questions
- 5-point Likert: Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree
- Demographics

## Results-Demographics
- N=81 currently enrolled in an RN-BS program
  - 22 Private Christian
  - 58 Public
- Enrollment status: 68% part time (<12 credits/semester)
- Employment Status: 69% full time
- 91% female
- Most common age range: 30-39
  - Private/public: 50-59/30-39
- 64% returned to BS ≤ 6 years
  - 34% returned to BS ≤ 2 years
  - Private university took longer to return, 50% >10 years
### Results-Facilitators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal desire to learn/advance knowledge</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>93.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional/career advancement</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>88.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to better serve patients</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>78.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ease of access to program/courses</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>71.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to increase recognition from &amp; ability to serve the professional community</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>59.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* N varies due to missing data

### Results-Facilitators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Encouragement through family</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>50.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuition Reimbursement</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>45.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articulation agreement/ease of transferring previously earned credits</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>43.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to meet entrance requirements</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>40.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouragement through external sources (e.g. employer, professional organization)</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>39.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Required for graduate studies</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>35.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* N varies due to missing data

### Facilitators-Difference

- "Opportunity to increase recognition from and ability to serve the professional community"  
  - Private university participants = 68.2%  
  - Public university participants = 55.2%
Themes-Facilitators

1. Desire for personal growth
2. Professional and career enhancement
3. Tuition reimbursement
4. Programmatic and articulation friendliness
5. Encouragement by others

Results-Barriers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family constraints (eg: spouse, children, personal)</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>80.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>79.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job constraints</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>65.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of increase in pay after completing BS level education</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>54.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of financial assistance</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>45.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of differential treatment between AD and BS RNs</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>42.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior student loans</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>40.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* N varies due to missing data

Differences Barriers

- "Cost"
  - 86.4% of the private university
  - 74.1% of the public university

- "Lack of increase in pay after completing BS level education"
  - 45.5% private university
  - 58.6% public university
1. Family and job constraints
2. Financial concerns
3. Lack of differential treatment between AD and BS RNs

Recommendations

- Generous tuition reimbursement, managerial and institutional encouragement, and campaigns
- Consider requiring all RNs to obtain a BS degree within a reasonably allotted amount of time
- Child and eldercare, flexible scheduling, paying for attending classes, paid time off, and loan forgiveness.
- Acknowledge the differences between AD- and BS-prepared RNs by distinguishing between them
- More generous pay increase for obtaining a BS

Recommendations-Governing Bodies

- Publicize the benefits of BS education such as through national campaigns and advertisement
- Consider enacting loan forgiveness programs and generous tuition assistance for all AD RNs returning for BS education.
- Legislation that mandates all AD nurses in all states return for a BS degree within a reasonable timeline.
Recommendations-Higher Education

- Provide ease of access to RN-BS programs/courses: offer online/convenient time and place of courses.
- Offer acceptance to all qualified RN-BS applicants.
- Encourage to continue on to graduate studies.
- Provide dedicated advisement and information on loans and scholarships.
- Provide articulation agreements with AD programs and readily accept transfer credits rather than require students repeat content.

Conclusions

- The study findings provide a first step toward informed interventions that will help ensure that academic progression for a greater percentage of AD RNs becomes a reality.
- We aspire that this knowledge will ultimately serve to increase the percentage of BS and higher prepared RNs in the U.S.
- We recommend further study.

Questions?

Thank You
References


