



CONESTOGA

Connect Life and Learning

Conestoga College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning
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Final Status Report
ONCAT Project 2016-32
Enhancing the PSW to PN Bridge through Responsive
Pathway Redesign
December 22, 2016

Executive Summary:

Conestoga College ITAL (Conestoga) has worked to enhance an educational pathway between the Personal Support Worker certificates (PSW) to Conestoga's Practical Nursing diploma program (PN).

The goal of this project was to redesign a pathway to the Practical Nursing (PN) Diploma for Personal Support Workers (PSW). Through an integrated program design, curriculum was intentionally developed to meet the diverse learning needs of the Personal Support Worker. The implementation of the new PSW to PN redesign and related curriculum enhances the student experience while ensuring that graduates obtain the knowledge, skills, and judgement to successfully complete the Canadian Practical Nursing Registration Exam. Standardized admission processes further strengthened the bridge resulting in what we expect will be improved student retention and success.

This unique pathway provides opportunities for PSWs to continue to work part-time gaining valuable experience in the health-care field, while working towards their diploma; typically requiring one to two days per week. This certificate to diploma pathway provides students an opportunity to explore health care as a PSW, helping meet their goals of becoming a nurse, for those wishing to do so. The opportunity to provide highly engaging and interactive learning opportunities allows PSWs to engage in continuing education and has implications for meeting needs-based workforce demands. This format will engage students who may otherwise be unable to enter full-time programming. It is our intent to increase student retention and success by strengthening integrated knowledge-practice learning by utilizing online, clinical and simulation-based learning opportunities. Improved retention, student success and satisfaction were key priorities of this pathway redesign. This pathway redesign strengthens both the academic rigor of the pathway and better supports the needs and expectations of our future students.