



Expanding Nurses Improving Care for Healthsystem Elders (NICHE) to Rural NYS Hospitals

Program Announcement/Description

NICHE (www.nicheprogram.org) has been funded by the New York State Health Foundation for a service-oriented grant that will pay for participation of 20 hospitals located in rural NYS areas to implement the NICHE program. This project will be implemented using customized resources, facilitated by a Geriatric Advanced Practice Nurse (APN), through web-based communication strategies. It is anticipated that the 20 hospitals will train approximately 250 nurses and other health care providers to provide evidence-based geriatric care to an estimated 1500 older hospitalized patients over eighteen months. This project will scale-up the existing NICHE program to reach more hospitals and staff in rural areas that are without access to geriatric providers in order to improve quality of care for older inpatients and serve as a model for replication throughout New York State and nationally.

Site Inclusion Criteria:

Acute care general hospitals in Northern NYS (Central, Western or Capital districts) that are either located in a rural county (Steuben, Chautauqua, Alleghany, Cattaraugus, Genesee, Wyoming, Oswego, Cayuga, St. Lawrence, Jefferson, Chenango, Cortland, Lewis, Clinton, Columbia, Delaware, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Montgomery, Otsego) OR 200 beds or less and located in a county with Rural Urban Commuting Area Codes (Ontario, Wayne, Livingston, Orleans, Madison, Oneida, Herkimer, Oswego, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schoharie).

Site Benefits:

Receive NICHE Leadership & Staff Training. At least three members of each site will participate in the Rural NYS NICHE Leadership Training Program (LTP; 38 contact hours completed in 6 weeks) that will be offered at the same time as the usual NICHE LTP but all interactive activities (discussion forums, blogs, webinars) will be facilitated specifically for participating hospitals by the project APN. Following collection of baseline data (usually takes 4-6 weeks to complete), the hospitals will implement web-based staff education

(usually takes 3-4 months for staff to complete).:

- An interdisciplinary Introduction to Gerontology (4 contact hours) to be provided to at least 50% of health care providers practicing on units providing care to older adults.
- A Geriatric Resource (Registered) Nurse educational program (20 contact hours) to be provided to at least 25% of registered nurses practicing on units providing care to older adults. The 14 topics include: Why Geriatric Nursing, Age Related Changes in Health, Cognition: Depression, Delirium, and Dementia, Falls, Family Caregiving, Function, Health Care Decisions, Medications, Nutrition, Hydration, and Oral Health, Pain, Pressure Ulcers and Skin Tears, Restraints, Sleep, and Urinary Incontinence
- Staff education will be supplemented by monthly webinars facilitated by the project APN and established NICHE sites in Rochester and Syracuse. These webinars will include supplemental lectures for additional training, journal club, and case study rounds activities.
- The APN will revise and create NICHE training resources specific to rural hospital needs.

Receive all of the benefits of full NICHE Designation

Including: Clinical protocols and organizational tools critical to embedding evidence-based geriatric care practices based on the book, [Evidence-Based Geriatric Nursing Protocols for Best Practice](#).

- An E-Learning Center includes interactive e-learning resources and a continuing education center to earn and track continuing education credits. The center is designed to provide flexible, 24/7 availability to help sites engage and educate staff at their convenience. These include staff development programs specific to the care of older adults noted above.
- Other staff training materials (not web-based) such as 16 hours of a core curriculum for the Geriatric Patient Care Associate (GPCA or nursing assistant) that includes six, active learning modules aimed at developing geriatric sensitive care. The modules (e.g., Let's Get Our Patients Moving, Is Your Patient Confused?) include Scripted PowerPoint presentations with active learning opportunities.
- Tools to develop and evaluate the business case for a hospital or health system-wide geriatric initiative performance improvement activities and measures
- Access to the NICHE Community of Collaboration including discussion forums and wikis for virtual interactions. All content is archived, with advanced search and browsing tools
- Discounts for NICHE Events (conferences and webinars)

Receive on-going implementation support.

The APN will also interact with individual sites via bi-monthly conference calls, provide participating sites assistance with implementation of action plans and staff training, and provide on-going assistance using an internal web-site, learning management system, and webinars for additional training, journal club, and case study rounds activities.

Participate in a rural-urban NYS collaborative:

The project APN will facilitate web-based (project-specific discussion forums, chat rooms, wikis) and other (video or phone conferencing) strategies to foster communication among participating sites and established NICHE sites in Rochester & Syracuse. These will be used to discuss system level and clinical practice problems and solutions on line.

Provide outcomes:

Nurse and patient data will be collected with web-based surveys at baseline (prior to the sites implementing their action plans) and 6 months following baseline. The NICHE Benchmarking Service will provide individual benchmarking reports to participating sites (compare to all NICHE sites and to all NICHE rural sites). We will use a pre-post design for both individual hospital reports and aggregate data analysis (for dissemination regionally and nationally).

Site Commitment:

Participating sites will not pay initial (\$4950) or annual (\$4950/year) NICHE fees, but must commit to the following,

- Staff for project leadership/implementation: At least three key personnel committed to improving care of older patients who will serve as the NICHE Leadership Team and core (multidisciplinary) steering committee for the NICHE implementation. They will participate in a web-based NICHE Leadership Training Program, develop an action plan for implementation, and at least one representative will attend a NICHE Conference (approximate cost for conference/travel is \$1500).
- Designation of NICHE Coordinator: .25 FTE to act as primary contact for project, directs NICHE Leadership Team, NICHE Steering Committee and all on-site implementation of NICHE. Oversees data collection at baseline and following NICHE implementation for both nursing and unit-level patient outcomes (complication rates).

- Time for interdisciplinary staff and registered nurse education, and for nurses (expect 50% staff working on adult patient units) to complete on-line survey at baseline and post-implementation.
- Computers and IT support for staff to access on-line education, web-based interaction with APN, and web-based submission of staff data as well as unit-based patient outcome data.

For further information you may please contact:

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*To be included in the June NICHE Leadership Training Program
hospitals must register by May 24th, 2011.*

*I hope you will join us in this opportunity to improve healthcare for
older adults in your community and we look forward to your
participation.*