



BETTY IRENE MOORE NURSING INITIATIVE

FOCUS ON *Bay Area Simulation Collaborative –
Connecting Technology to Learning*

Background Summary

The shortage of registered nurses (RNs) is severe and growing, and today's healthcare industry is in dire need of more nurses to meet the demands of patient care. The number of acutely ill patients is increasing along with the pace in which hospitals operate, requiring more highly skilled RNs at the bedside.

However, there are obstacles to finding and training RNs to meet this challenge. Currently, nursing schools are required to provide students a large number of clinical training hours within a healthcare facility, often a hospital. Due to a maximum ratio of 10 students per instructor, the number of placements available within hospitals is constrained by faculty availability. The lack of available clinical placements forces nursing schools to limit their enrollment. Additionally, nursing school graduates often do not have the real-life experience necessary to develop vital critical thinking and problem solving skills in a clinical setting.

In the San Francisco Bay Area, through funding provided by the Betty Irene Moore Nursing Initiative (BIMNI), the Foundation for California Community Colleges (FCCC) in partnership with the California Institute for Nursing & Health Care (CINHC) are addressing this issue. They are implementing a program that uses high-fidelity simulation technology now available to the healthcare community.

Better Training, More Experienced Nurses

BIMNI granted \$8.3 million to FCCC to launch the Bay Area Simulation Collaborative (BASC). FCCC will use this funding to establish five Regional Simulation Centers across the Bay Area for nursing students and practicing nurses. Each Regional Simulation Center will be equipped with high-fidelity simulators with realistic anatomy and clinical functionality to replicate real-life medical scenarios. These centers offers students the opportunity to develop critical thinking and problem solving skills in a more predictable and controlled environment where they can experience trial and error without risk to patients and receive immediate constructive feedback.

As simulation can replace some of the required onsite clinical placement time for nursing students, the BASC has the potential to significantly increase enrollment at local nursing schools. The simulation centers also will introduce a new teaching model to the Bay Area that will produce better-prepared nurse graduates and will further develop the skills of existing RNs.

FCCC, CINHC and other community stakeholders will establish five Regional Simulation Cen-

ters across the Bay Area during the next several years. Once completed, the BASC will be the first program of its kind in a large metropolitan area.

Looking Forward

The long-term goals of the program are to:

- Increase nursing student enrollment by 20 percent
- Improve nurse graduate critical thinking skills and other competencies by 10 percent
- Track improvements among students, including:
 - Student retention
 - Satisfaction
 - Self-confidence
 - Performance in a clinical setting