

Initiative Overview

Improving Patient Care in the San Francisco Bay Area

Background Summary

Nurses provide approximately 95 percent of all patient care in hospitals and are on the front lines of rapid changes affecting the health care industry. Registered Nurses (RNs) are essential to safe, effective, timely and patient-centric care. However, RNs are challenged in delivering this care as:

- Increasingly, patients have multiple and more highly acute illnesses, yet treatment is limited to shorter hospital stays;
- There is a serious and growing shortage of RNs across the country, including in the San Francisco Bay Area; and
- RN training has not kept pace with technological advancements and the changing needs of an aging population.

As a result, avoidable medical errors claim up to 98,000 lives in the U.S. every year and serious preventable complications affect many more lives, according to the Institute of Medicine.

The Response: The Betty Irene Moore Nursing Initiative

After suffering adverse consequences from a medical error, Betty Irene Moore made improving nursing care in her community a priority. As a result, the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation established the Betty Irene Moore Nursing Initiative (BIMNI) in 2003.

By investing \$123 million over 10 years, BIMNI seeks to improve the quality of nursing-related patient outcomes in adult acute care hospitals in the San Francisco Bay Area—in Alameda, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Clara counties—by both helping to develop a larger, more highly skilled workforce and by implementing more effective hospital practices.

Fixing a Broken Pipeline

The U.S. faces a nursing shortage of more than 200,000 nurses, and it is projected that California will be short over 40,000 registered nurses by 2010.

At a time when a large percentage of hospital RNs are approaching retirement age, nursing schools are constrained in their capacity to enroll new nursing students. In some cases, it takes qualified nursing applicants up to five years to be admitted to nursing school. In 2005, California nursing schools turned away approximately 14,181, or 62 percent, of qualified applicants because schools were unable to either secure the nursing faculty to instruct a larger class or provide students with the clinical training opportunities required.

To help generate more new RNs in the Bay Area, BIMNI supports programs to:

- **Train and fund more RN educators.** BIMNI is creating additional nurse educator programs and incentives for graduates to spend three years instructing.
- **Expand pre-licensure nursing school programs.** BIMNI-funded programs are expanding entry-level nursing programs and clinical placement opportunities for nursing students.

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- **Expand continuing education for new nurses.** By easing the transition from education to the hospital setting, BIMNI programs aim to increase retention of new nurses within hospitals.
- **Increase collaboration between nursing schools and hospitals.** To increase the efficiency of the education system, BIMNI programs are increasing collaboration between schools and hospitals through technology and new centralized community resources.

Higher Standards—Better Care

Approximately 30 percent of all healthcare costs, equivalent to \$390 billion in 2000, are the direct result of poor quality care, according to the Midwest Business Group on Health. Unfortunately, hospital culture and processes are not consistently oriented towards patient safety. In addition, while nurses provide the majority of direct care, the quality of care they deliver is directly influenced by the effectiveness of the healthcare team with which they work—physicians, pharmacists, respiratory therapists and other healthcare professionals—and the supporting processes in the workplace.

BIMNI is working towards ensuring more thorough and reliable implementation of hospital best practices, with the goal of increasing the quality of patient care and achieving better outcomes. It seeks to:

- **Implement more effective RN best practices.** BIMNI supports the development of skills and resources enabling RNs to consistently deliver effective clinical practices.
- **Create systems to support patient safety.** BIMNI is working to implement standardized systems-wide best practices, improved work processes and an organizational focus on patient safety in its target hospitals.
- **Improve discharge planning for high risk seniors.** BIMNI is identifying and supporting dissemination of new models of effective discharge planning for senior patients.