



Hawai'i State Center For Nursing 2025-2029 Strategic Planning FOCUS GROUPS SUMMARY REPORT Submitted January 21, 2025

BACKGROUND

As part of its strategic planning process, the Hawai'i State Center for Nursing (HSCN/Center) engaged its stakeholder community in an Appreciative Inquiry process to understand better the past, present, and future impacts of the Center. These engagement events occurred in the following communities, and participant names are included at the end of this report:

- [O'ahu](#) October 16, 2024 17 participants
- [Hawai'i](#) November 8, 2024 22 participants
- [O'ahu](#) November 21, 2024 19 participants
- [Maui](#) December 6, 2024 17 participants
- [Kaua'i](#) January 3, 2025 4 participants

The Appreciative Inquiry process focused on the strengths, opportunities, and aspirations related to the work of the Center. Themes cutting across the sessions are summarized below. These themes will inform the development of results the Center will aim for in its strategic plan and the Strategic Priorities to be implemented for 2025-2029.

STRENGTHS

- **Collaboration and Networking:** The Hawai'i State Center for Nursing is frequently lauded for its ability to foster strong collaboration and networking among nursing professionals, educational institutions, and government entities. This collaborative approach is particularly beneficial during crises, as it allows for the sharing of resources, knowledge, and mutual support. The Center facilitates connections through various events and programs, strengthening the nursing community and enhancing its collective resilience. This interconnectedness helps nursing professionals to work together more effectively, ultimately improving patient care and outcomes.

When the state began requiring documentation of CEUs for RN licensure, it was a confusing

time for many of us. I frequently reached out to Liane for clarity. She came to our facility multiple times to present information, making it easier for me to understand and relay to my colleagues. Her presentations were instrumental in helping us navigate the new requirements. Over two years, we successfully trained a third of the workforce, ensuring everyone was compliant. This support exemplified the Center's commitment to education and professional development for nurses across the state.

- **Data-Driven Practices and Research:** The Center's commitment to utilizing data and evidence-based practices is consistently highlighted as a key strength. This focus on data helps inform policies and initiatives, allowing for the evaluation of program effectiveness and support for advocacy efforts. Providing relevant research and data is also valued and helps nurses stay informed and enhance their practices. This commitment to a data-driven approach ensures that decisions are grounded in solid evidence, leading to more effective and impactful outcomes.

As a [Kaua'i]CC instructor, I work closely with new grads, and I find the residency program essential. I attended a conference on evidence-based practice that highlighted the value of the data the Center provides, which is relevant to our practice. The funding to attend conferences has been beneficial for my professional development. I value the statistics and research shared by the Center, as they help identify areas where we need to focus in our education and practice. The Center's ability to look at the bigger picture is crucial, as it impacts our specialties and the overall nursing landscape.

- **Support and Community Building:** A strong sense of community and support is a recurring theme, with the Center being recognized for its ability to create a supportive environment for nurses. This includes support from managers and colleagues and through programs like nurse residencies, which helps alleviate anxiety for new graduates. The Center also fosters a sense of belonging among healthcare professionals, creating connections and ensuring all voices are heard. This emphasis on support and community-building creates a more positive and collaborative atmosphere for all involved.

Our group discussed the creation of the CNA to LPN Bridge program, developed in response to the staffing crisis during the pandemic. Collaborating with the Healthcare Association of Hawai'i and Maui College, we successfully doubled the number of LPN graduates in the state.

This initiative not only increased educational capacity but also provided opportunities for CNAs to advance in their nursing careers, significantly impacting the nursing workforce in Hawai‘i.

- **Leadership and Advocacy:** The dedication and proactive approach of the Center’s leadership are consistently recognized as a strength, especially during crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. As a team working with passion and commitment, the Center effectively represents the voices of nurses, advocating for their needs and ensuring their concerns are heard. This responsiveness allows the Center to address urgent issues, mobilize resources, and proactively manage challenges in nursing and the broader community. The Center's ability to respond to challenges and advocate for nurses demonstrates a commitment to the nursing profession and the communities they serve.

I participated in a significant initiative where we reviewed over 500 laws to ensure they included Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) and other healthcare professionals. The Hawai‘i State Center for Nursing brought together stakeholders from various groups to tackle this challenge. Laura’s leadership was crucial in keeping us focused on our own scope of practice. It took two years, but we successfully identified necessary changes to promote inclusivity in healthcare legislation. This experience demonstrated the power of collaboration and the Center’s dedication to advocating for all nursing professionals in Hawai‘i.

- **Educational and Professional Development:** The Center is acknowledged for its role in advancing nursing education and professional development. This includes providing scholarships and funding for educational opportunities like conferences and training sessions. The Center also supports the growth of nursing leaders through mentoring programs, which helps to strengthen the overall nursing workforce. By providing these opportunities, the Center enhances the skills and competencies of the nursing workforce, contributing to improved patient care and the advancement of the profession.

As a new graduate in the emergency department at Kona Community Hospital, I felt a strong connection to my community, having been born and raised on this island. During my interview with my manager, I expressed my desire to stay and contribute to the community. The nurse residency program has been a vital support system for me and my colleagues, helping us navigate the overwhelming experience of being new grads. With the backing of our managers and staff, I feel empowered to grow in my role without the fear that typically accompanies such a transition.

OPPORTUNITIES

- **Technology and AI Integration:** There is a significant opportunity to leverage technology and artificial intelligence (AI) to enhance various aspects of nursing. This includes using AI to improve patient care, streamline processes, and support decision-making. However, it's crucial to implement these technologies thoughtfully, ensuring they complement nurses' critical thinking and clinical judgment rather than replace them. The focus should be on using technology to enhance the human aspects of nursing care, not diminish it.
- **Intergenerational Mentoring and Collaboration:** The sources highlight opportunities for fostering relationships between experienced nurses and newer generations through mentoring programs. This would facilitate the transfer of knowledge, support skill development, and enhance retention rates, especially for novice nurses. Additionally, there is a need to adapt educational and workplace practices to meet the needs of younger nurses. This involves recognizing that each generation brings unique perspectives and a desire to learn, contributing to a more inclusive and effective nursing community.
- **Community Engagement and Outreach:** There's an opportunity to increase engagement with diverse nursing communities and the broader community to ensure that the Center addresses varied needs. This includes understanding local community resources and fostering a sense of belonging among healthcare professionals. Outreach programs should target young students to cultivate interest in nursing careers early on. By understanding and addressing the needs of diverse populations, the nursing profession can serve the community more effectively.
- **Improved Collaboration and Resource Sharing:** There are opportunities to improve collaboration and resource sharing among healthcare institutions and providers. This includes creating frameworks for sharing clinical sites, resources, and best practices among nursing programs. Collaboration should also extend to different healthcare facilities and organizations to improve consistency in care and address shared challenges. By establishing a resource repository for sharing successful initiatives, providers can enhance their practice and contribute to a unified approach to healthcare.
- **Enhanced Support for New Nurses:** The need for better support for new nursing graduates is a recurring theme. This includes addressing issues such as the high cost of living, student loan debt, and lack of housing, which are barriers to employment in Hawai'i. Furthermore, there should be a focus on bridging the gap between education and practice by supporting residency programs and providing mentorship opportunities. These efforts would help to retain new graduates in Hawai'i and foster their professional growth.
- **Focus on Workforce Needs and Retention:** Multiple sources emphasize the need to address the broader workforce challenges, such as staffing shortages, workload, and job satisfaction. This includes improving working conditions, considering different shift lengths, and ensuring fair pay. Creating more appealing work environments, which include addressing the cost of living and

providing supportive systems, can also enhance job satisfaction and retention of nurses. There should also be a focus on making bedside nursing a more attractive career path and retaining nurses within Hawai'i.

ASPIRATIONS

- **Workforce Support and Retention:** A key aspiration is to improve the work conditions for nurses and to increase retention. This involves addressing issues like manageable workloads, better staffing ratios, pay equity, and the high cost of living. There is a desire for strategies to encourage new graduates to remain in Hawaii after completing their education.
- **Enhanced Nursing Education:** There is a desire for improved support for nursing educators, along with an evolution in nursing education. This includes ensuring that educators are adequately compensated and that students are well prepared for real world challenges, with access to resources, training and opportunities that support lifelong learning. There is also an aspiration to bridge the generational gaps and adapt educational practices to meet the needs of younger generations.
- **Professional Development:** A significant aspiration is to establish robust mentorship programs to support new nurses and foster connections within the profession. This includes the desire to cultivate future leaders who can effectively advocate for the nursing profession. These programs would also aim to transfer knowledge, enhance skills, and support the professional growth of novice nurses.
- **Technological Integration in Nursing:** There is a strong aspiration to integrate Artificial Intelligence (AI) and other technologies into nursing practices to enhance efficiency and decision-making. This includes ensuring that AI complements the human aspects of nursing, rather than replacing them, and that nurses are trained to use these tools effectively. There is also a need to develop confidence in new technologies for their successful integration.
- **Professional Collaboration:** There is a strong aspiration for greater unity and collaboration among nursing professionals, including those in specialized and non-acute care settings, to more effectively advocate for the needs of the nursing workforce and the communities they serve. There is also the desire to expand community-based care and integrate services across different healthcare professions.

SESSION PARTICIPANTS

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| 1. Genecir Joan Acidera | 5. Shana Alexander | 10. Joy Bliss |
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