



Movement to Eradicate Racism in Nursing: A Mid-Atlantic Academic-Practice Collaborative Call to Action

Edilma L. Yearwood, PhD, RN, FAAN

Background

In 2022 the American Nurses Association took a bold and overdue step in acknowledging nursing's long-standing racist practices towards nurses of color within the profession and called for dismantling of structures, systems, policies and practices that contribute to and perpetuate racial injustices and health inequities. Numerous other professional organizations joined in this movement highlighting the mandate to stop the historical harm that these practices caused and continue to cause.

Introduction

The Mid-Atlantic Collaborative was formed between four organizations (Georgetown SON, MedStar Health, INOVA Health System, Children's National Medical Center and Georgetown University Health Center including Lombardi Cancer Center) to eradicate racism across our academic and practice environments.. Our goals include:

- 1) Informing student formation as anti-racist practitioners
- 2) Assessing clinical practice and academic environments for recruitment, retention, advancement and satisfaction related to belonging, diversity, inclusion and anti-racism
- 3) Implementing needed structural changes to promote diverse, inclusive and anti-racist practice and academic environments.

Methods

Members meet monthly via zoom to identify our mission and to discuss concerns from the academic and clinical environments. Our initial work centered on developing and submitting a grant proposal through the ANA. More recently we established specific initial tasks, identified assessments that are needed, and importance of keeping administrative leaders aware of group activities.

Priority areas include:

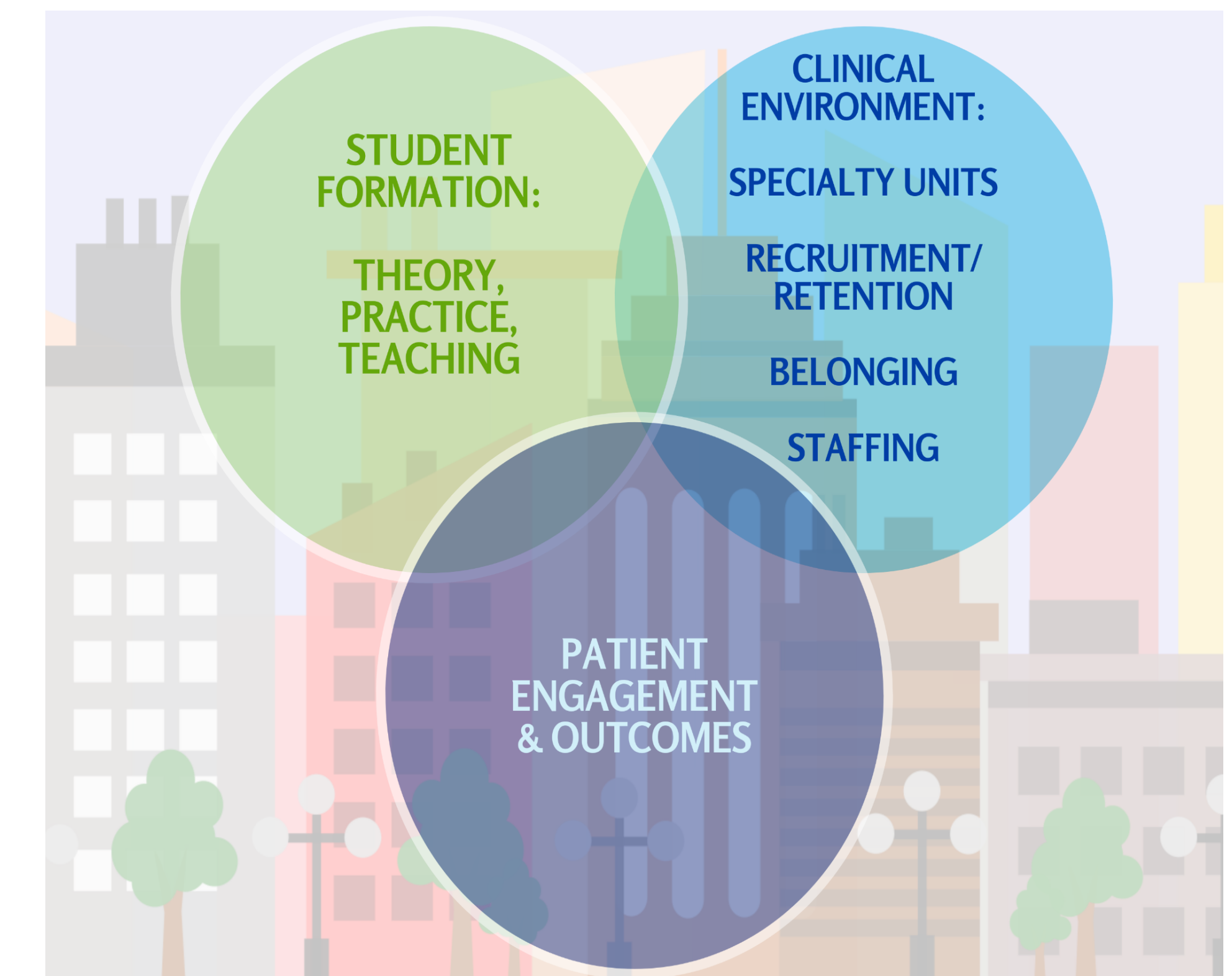
1. Assess the meaning of belonging to all distinct nursing groups (students, new staff nurses, educators and experienced staff nurses)
2. Assess racial diversity of nurses working in ICU's across practice sites
3. Conduct an education series on structural racism, impact of racism on patient, student and nurse outcomes and importance of practicing from a cultural humility perspective
4. Work with hiring managers in ICUs re: importance of diversifying the practice pool
5. Establish timelines and identify tools for use in ongoing assessments and monitoring of experiences of racism within the academic or practice sites, satisfaction, sense of belonging, retention and students of color applications to the PWI academic institution and specialty units within the practice partner sites.
6. By year 2, incorporate assessment of patient engagement and outcomes specific to satisfaction and experiences with diversity in the clinical arena.
7. Apply for funding to hire a program manager and facilitate the work of the group

Discussion

We wish to create environments (academic and practice) where all nursing students and nurses feel they belong and are welcomed, ensure diverse hiring practices and improve retention rates. Our work is initially focused on nursing students and nurses with a long-term goal of assessing impact on patient outcomes and engagement in their care. Academic focus will be on self-advocacy, agency and literacy on racism. Practice focus will be on obtaining assessment data, teaching about racism and it's impact, changing hiring practices in select units and understanding of implications for the healthcare consumer within racist systems.

Results

MODEL



Conclusion

A core group of 8 from the 4 initial sites have set up monthly zoom meetings. The group is committed to working together on the identified tasks with the goal of making changes in each system to address racist practices and policies in order to improve sense of belonging for all and positively impact nurse retention.

Select References

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Biography

Edilma L. Yearwood, PhD, RN, FAAN, is Associate Professor and faculty in the Georgetown University School of Nursing. She is Senior Advisor for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Belonging and Anti-Racism. Dr. Yearwood received her BSN from the University of Connecticut, her MA in Nursing from New York University, and her PhD in Nursing from Adelphi University. She completed a postdoctoral fellowship in Child and Family at New York University and a postdoctoral fellowship in Nursing Research at the University of Pennsylvania. She is a Fellow, American Academy of Nursing (AAN) and has held numerous positions in the International Society of Psychiatric Nurses including serving as President of the organization. She is the President-Elect of the Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice (formerly Orthopsychiatry), an interdisciplinary 100-year-old organization. She was a Fulbright Senior Specialist from 2007-2012 and did her Fulbright immersion in Jamaica. In January 2022, she became Editor of the journal Archives of Psychiatric Nursing where she leads one of the nationally recognized psychiatric nursing journals. She is lead editor and contributing author of two textbooks, Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health: A Resource for Advanced Practice Psychiatric and Primary Care Practitioners in Nursing and the Routledge Handbook of Global Mental Health Nursing: Evidence, Practice and Empowerment. Dr. Yearwood teaches mental health nursing, undergraduate research to honors nursing students, and a university-wide health equity course. She helped develop the PhD in Nursing Program at Georgetown that will commence in fall 2025 and will also teach in that program. Her research interests include mental health of immigrant youth, mood dysregulation, youth empowerment, community-based participatory action, and social determinants of health. She is Project Director of a HRSA grant titled, Nurturing Child Well-Being: Educating Communities on Social Determinants of Health.

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