

TriService Nursing Research Program

STRATEGIC PLANNING CONFERENCE

February 3–4, 2009

The Hilton Hotel
Silver Spring, MD

SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

The TriService Nursing Research Program (TSNRP) 2-day Strategic Planning Conference took place on 3–4 February 2009. Participants included the Corps Chiefs: COL Susanne Clark, Army Nurse Corps; CAPT Kathleen Pierce, Navy Nurse Corps; and Col. Donnalee Sykes, Air Force Nurse Corps. Other participants were LTC Deborah Kenny, Director of TSNRP; the TSNRP Advisory Council (AC), which represents each of the three services; and experts in different aspects of nursing research. A facilitator, CAPT Quindag-Raffels, guided the group's discussions.

CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES

1. Re-evaluate mission and develop a vision for TSNRP.
2. Evaluate the currency of TSNRP goals.
3. Re-evaluate TSNRP research priorities.
4. Evaluate and set criteria for research funding.
5. Evaluate military nurse researchers' support needs and determine the best methods to meet researchers' development needs while maintaining TSNRP's priorities and high scientific standards.

OVERARCHING PRE-CONFERENCE QUESTIONS

The Director had requested participants to answer the following four questions and return their answers in advance of this meeting:

1. Do the funding priorities need to be reexamined, and if so, what are your priorities for funding?
2. Should TSNRP bring back the "Fast Track" granting mechanism for small, Corps Chief-directed, quick-turnaround research projects?
3. The TriService Research Support Group will comprise Research Interest Groups (RIGs) as networks rather than geographically defined regional networks. Should TSNRP provide financial support for RIG projects that could benefit all three Nurse Corps?
4. What, if any, sanctions should be imposed on researchers who fail to comply with regulatory and/or ethical conventions?

Participants' responses received prior to the conference were collated and distributed to the group at the start of Day 1 (Attachment A).

DAY 1

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

CAPT Jacqueline Rychnovsky delivered the conference's keynote address in place of Dr. Pat DeLeon, who was unable to attend. CAPT Rychnovsky shared a number of documents, memoranda, and articles that Dr. DeLeon had given to her from the collection of Sen. Daniel Inouye (D-HI). Together these items form a body of history of nursing research. Included among the documents were the following.

- ❑ An article from *Nursing* magazine arguing for increased political leverage for the nursing profession
- ❑ A response from the Director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to Sen. Inouye's inquiry about nurse membership on NIH advisory committees
- ❑ Correspondence with the NIH Director relating to an NIH study assessing the feasibility of increasing support for nursing research in keeping with the NIH mission
- ❑ Memoranda between Sen. Inouye and Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-MA) regarding the establishment of the National Center for Nursing Research and its expansion into an institute

CAPT Rychnovsky closed by conveying greetings from Dr. DeLeon and Sen. Inouye, who, according to Dr. DeLeon, has always held military nurses in high esteem because of the care he received from them during World War II. Dr. DeLeon had further reported to CAPT Rychnovsky that Sen. Inouye was brought up to believe that nurses are "competent, independent, and professional" and that activities are ongoing in his congressional office to advocate for nursing education and reimbursement.

EXECUTIVE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

COL SUSANNE CLARK

COL Clark reported that the first Army campaign conference was held in October 2008 to form an imperative that will guide the transformation of the Army Nurse Corps. The objectives developed at that conference include the development of broad-spectrum leaders for evidence-based nursing care delivery systems that encompass not only inpatient but also flight, Medevac, home health, rehabilitation, and wounded patient populations. The guiding objective of the transformation of the Corps is to develop military nursing capacity for the future. To that end, the Army Corps is looking to researchers to provide the foundation for how to transform the profession of military nursing. COL Clark informed the participants that they will be called upon to provide input to inform the Corps Chiefs' strategic imperatives.

In response to a question from a participant, COL Clark noted that the Army is also looking at how its academic and retired nurses are being used. The RN-to-MSN program is being developed, and the Navy is also looking at an initiative along these lines.

COL DONNALEA SYKES

Col Sykes said that she is looking forward to the outcome of an Air Force strategic planning session that will take place in March 2009 to develop the way ahead and that the outcomes of the

current conference will be instrumental in informing that meeting. Among other initiatives, the Air Force is looking at developing a career path for civilian nurses to allow them to expand their knowledge base.

CAPT KATHLEEN PIERCE

CAPT Pierce noted that the priorities of the three branches of military nursing are more similar than different. Noting that all three services have committed funding to support TSNRP, she said that the outcomes that are of ultimate concern to the military will be the services provided to the end customers—the military members served and the Corps Chiefs—in a time of war. She named posttraumatic stress disorder and family care as among some of the most important areas that affect the entire military system and in which nurses are in the forefront.

CAPT Pierce said that the Navy is hitting its stride on the six priorities identified at its September strategy meeting:

1. Leadership continuum—The development of junior officers is important to create a leadership continuum. Leadership imperatives include professional, clinical, and military leadership, competencies, and ops relevance.
2. Mentorship—Defined as “leadership with muscle,” mentorship is essential to ensuring that officers at all levels obtain needed resources and know where to seek additional resources where gaps exist.
3. Retention—An issue that cannot be looked at in isolation, retention will be the outcome of a nursing corps that attracts people who want to stay and serve, whether in active duty or reserves.
4. Force Shaping—As we look at merging and changing the mission of facilities, it is important to determine how resources are moved to the places where they are most appropriate and needed.
5. Clinical excellence—Clinical excellence is at the center of all military nursing and is expected not just from the standpoint of clinical proficiency but also clinical competence.
6. Communication—New ways of conveying information (e.g., blogging, podcasts), especially for junior officers, can be used to identify issues as well as to disseminate information about Corps activities. Security is a critical component of this priority.

CAPT Pierce closed by saying that TSNRP is seen as the lifeblood of military nursing and of how research is translated into practice. She thanked all the participants for their energy, intelligence, and hard work.

In response to a question, CAPT Pierce explained that the nurse corps sees a critical need for research to transform how nurses practice in the field. Political, professional, and national forces want to ensure that funds, research, and energy are being directed at the right resources. As such, there is a need to hear from researchers as well as from markets not previously heard from. The Corps recognizes a professional and leadership responsibility to ensure that practicing BSN nurses have a path to follow that leads them to higher levels. Issues relating to recruitment and retention are therefore critically important. Challenges include finding ways to make leadership positions out of “middle management” roles such as head nurse positions.

STATE OF THE PROGRAM

LTC Kenny reported that the pre activity survey received excellent response from the participants. Comments were distilled into themes and categories to form the basis of the discussions that would ensue over the next 2 days. The survey responses were shared with the Corps Chiefs to obtain their perspective and guidance (Attachment A).

LTC Kenny presented an overview of TSNRP's history, organizational structure, operations, and budget.

MISSION

The mission of TSNRP is to provide resources for the conduct and use of research to foster excellence in military nursing care.

GOALS

- Increase military nursing research capacity by providing opportunities for nurses to engage in military nursing research.
- Expand the breadth and depth of the research portfolio by encouraging and funding programs of research in TSNRP's focused areas of investigation.
- Develop partnerships for collaborative research among services, components, institutions, disciplines, and agencies.
- Build an infrastructure to stimulate and support military nursing research to provide resources to support exploration of salient military nursing research issues.

RESEARCH PRIORITIES

- Military deployment health
- Generating and translating research findings into practice in a military context
- Recruitment and retention of the military nursing work force
- Developing and sustaining military nurse competencies

BUDGET

TSNRP finally has a permanent funding structure. Starting in 2010, the program will receive \$6 million (\$2 million from each service). This annual budget will increase incrementally each year.

INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE RECOMMENDATIONS

LTC Kenny discussed TSNRP's progress to date in responding to the recommendations of the 1996 Institute of Medicine (IOM) report *The Program for Research in Military Nursing: Progress and Future Direction*. TSNRP has achieved the following IOM recommendations:

- Continue the TSNRP into the foreseeable future.
- Establish a stable, predictable funding base.
- Institutionalize the TSNRP in an operational sense.
- Provide oversight to the program.
- Employ a doctorally prepared military nurse researcher as director of the TSNRP.
- Conduct outcome and impact evaluations of the program at scheduled intervals.

The following areas represent continuing challenges for TSNRP:

- Develop mechanisms to facilitate programs of research.
- Develop and implement a plan for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the TSNRP.

RESEARCH AWARD CATEGORIES

- Novice investigator award: \$100,000
- 1- and 2-year award: \$450,000
- 3-year award: \$500,000
- Pilot project or feasibility award: \$75,000
- Research fellow award: \$150,000
- Evidence-based practice (EBP) award: \$150,000
- Graduate research award: \$30,000

GRANT MANAGEMENT SERVICES

- Develops and implements the annual call for proposals
- Organizes the scientific and programmatic review panels
- Programmatic oversight for active research studies
- Conducts annual post award grant management workshop

RESOURCE CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN NURSING

The TSNRP Resource Center provides the following programs:

- Grant camp I and II
- Novice Researcher Development Course
- Advanced grant camp for seasoned researchers and mentors
- Publication workshops

BATTLEFIELD AND DISASTER NURSING POCKET GUIDE

Dr. Elizabeth Bridges assembled this detailed pocket guide with input from all the services. Nurses can carry with them onto the battlefield or to a disaster site. The book is available for purchase on the GSA schedule.

WORK GROUP PRESENTATIONS

Following the discussions of the pre-conference questions, participants divided into four small groups. Each group included members of all three services, as well as representatives of the AC and researchers. Members of the Executive Board of Directors (EBOD) were also assigned to a specific small group.

Group 1: Mission and Vision

Group 2: Goal 2: Priorities

Group 3: Researcher Development

Group 4: Goals 1, 3, and 4 of the Evaluation of the 2005 Strategic Refinement Conference (Attachment B)

The groups spent the remainder of Day 1 in discussions and met again on the morning of Day 2 to wrap up their deliberations.

DAY 2

WORK GROUP PRESENTATIONS

At the end of Day 1, participants presented the outcomes of their small group discussions.

WORK GROUP 1: MISSION AND VISION

TSNRP MISSION	
Current	Proposed
To provide resources for the conduct and use of research to foster excellence in military nursing care.	To facilitate nursing research to optimize the health of military members and their beneficiaries.
TSNRP VISION	
<p>The premier program that fosters excellence in military nursing science.</p> <p><i>TSNRP has embarked on a journey to become the premier program that fosters excellence in military nursing science.</i></p> <p><i>The journey encompasses the vision of not one but many military services.</i></p>	
PROPOSED TSNRP VALUES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Innovativeness <input type="checkbox"/> Relevance <input type="checkbox"/> Excellence <input type="checkbox"/> Integrity <input type="checkbox"/> Inquiry <input type="checkbox"/> Jointness 	

WORK GROUP 2: GOAL 2 PRIORITIES: EXPAND THE BREADTH AND DEPTH OF THE RESEARCH PORTFOLIO BY ENCOURAGING AND FUNDING PROGRAMS OF RESEARCH IN TSNRP'S FOCUSED AREAS OF INVESTIGATION.

PROMOTE RESEARCH STRATEGIES	
CURRENT	PROPOSED
<p>Promulgate research in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Military deployment health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Examination of factors affecting the health of operational personnel and their families before, during, and after deployment <input type="checkbox"/> Developing and sustaining military nurse competencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Quantitative and qualitative studies on relevant operational or deployment military nursing competencies and evaluation of educational interventions <input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment and retention of the military nursing work force <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Interventional studies to enhance recruitment and retention of the military nursing workforce across the services <input type="checkbox"/> Generating and translating research findings into practice in a military context <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Nursing interventions on military-unique topics and patient outcomes ■ Applying research findings to practice in a military context that supports evaluation and testing of evidence-based practice 	<p>Promote research in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Force Health Protection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fit & ready force ■ Deploy with & care for the warrior ■ Care for all entrusted to our care <input type="checkbox"/> Nursing competencies and practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pt outcomes, quality, & safety ■ Translate research into practice/EBP ■ Clinical excellence ■ Knowledge management, education, & training <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership, ethics, and mentoring <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Health policy ■ Recruitment and retention ■ Preparing tomorrow's leaders ■ Care of the caregiver
CURRENT	SUGGESTED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Support a range of projects from new investigator projects to large scale, multi-site studies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Support a range of studies encompassing new investigators through large-scale, multi-site, inter-service studies.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Include studies addressing research utilization and evaluation in the portfolio. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Promote projects addressing the translation of knowledge and research findings into evidence-based practices in a military context.
Comments	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Retirees are included under the first proposed priority because if military members are concerned about retired relatives, they will have difficulty concentrating on their jobs. Furthermore, research that is relevant to retirees might also be relevant to warriors. Finally, many retirees receive care through the military's direct care system or TRICARE. <input type="checkbox"/> The retirees addressed by TSNRP research should not include non-retired veterans, whose needs are met through a different mode of care. 	

- The priorities need not have military uniqueness because all TSNRP proposal calls make very clear that grant applications must address issues that are unique to the military.
- Military nursing competencies can benefit from lessons learned in the civilian community. Nursing competency research should also address the different practice models used in the different services.

Tasks

- By the fall '09 Advisory Council meeting, implement strategies for marketing new research priorities, e.g., develop listserv, newsletter, web, blog with annual review determined by # of submissions, 1st time TSNRP submission, and number of funded proposals
- By May '09 the AC will solicit & select 2 research experts for each priority to be advisors &/or resource individuals to assist researchers w/ proposals, measured by # of proposals, satisfaction survey of applicants.
- Develop a task force comprised of the 3 service consultants & AC to review proposal process and communications as measured by satisfaction surveys developed by task force.

WORK GROUP 3: RESEARCH SUPPORT

RESEARCH SUPPORT

Cultivate research relationships

- Database/website creation
- Research interest groups
 - Develop blog
 - Capitalize on advisor experience
 - Identify advisors/advisees
 - Incentivize (conferences, etc.)
- Professional collaboration
 - Academia
 - Inter-service
 - Inter-professional
 - Department of Defense/Department of Veterans Affairs/civilian

Market research opportunities

- Outreach to communities
 - Scientific, academic, clinical, industry
- Deliberate service research planning
 - Career paths, assignments, facilities

Refine TSNRP processes

- Reformat grant development training
- Provide advanced research methodology training
- Simplify “final” report requirements and require manuscript submission
- Modify “Fast Track” granting mechanism

Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Work Group 3 discussed the possibility of offering a grant camp or continuing education programs for advanced researchers. An example of a continuing education topic is conducting community-based participatory research in a military setting. <input type="checkbox"/> Some discrepancies exist between the research that universities require their students to conduct and the types of research that TSNRP supports.
Tasks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> TSNRP might consider offering a mechanism similar to grant camp for investigators whose proposals to TSNRP were not funded. Another option is for a member of one of the new TSNRP research interest groups to review the comments on the proposal with the investigator. <input type="checkbox"/> TSNRP could create a database of experts who are willing to consult with TSNRP applicants. <input type="checkbox"/> TSNRP might train university-based mentors on military culture.

WORK GROUP 4: GOALS 1, 3, AND 4

GOALS 1, 3, AND 4	
CURRENT	PROPOSED
<p>Goal 1: Increase the military nursing research capacity by providing opportunities for nurses to engage in military nursing research.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Increase the number of military nursing researchers. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide opportunities for research skills development. <input type="checkbox"/> Foster mentoring relationships to facilitate military nursing research. 	<p>Goal 1: Expand the cadre of nursing researchers.</p>
<p>Goal 3: Develop partnerships for collaborative research among services, components, institutions, disciplines, & agencies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Seek interagency and inter-service opportunities for collaboration. <input type="checkbox"/> Promote the nursing perspective in multi-disciplinary research. <input type="checkbox"/> Identify opportunities for military nurse researchers to participate in policy development, program planning, and direction-making. 	<p>Goal 3: Foster partnerships for collaborative research.</p>
<p>Goal 4: Build an infrastructure to stimulate and support military nursing research to provide resources to support exploration of salient military nursing research issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Expand and maintain a web-based database of all TSNRP-funded studies. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide access to military existing data set 	<p>Goal 4: Provide an infrastructure to stimulate and support nursing research and EBP.</p>

<p>resources for answering policy questions as well as answering research questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Facilitate consultative resources among experienced investigators, novice investigators, clinicians, and other experts. ❑ Plan for a State of Science conference to synthesize the research on targeted military nursing research topics. ❑ Support dissemination activities, including organizing conferences, and provide publication support. ❑ Increase the visibility of TSNRP's opportunities and outcomes. 	
Comments	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ A strategy for Goal 1: disseminate TSNRP information through the e-mail lists used by nursing leaders in each of the services. ❑ A well-funded, collaborative study could answer questions critical to the Department of Defense and Department of Veterans Affairs. Such projects would have a high level of risk but could bring substantial benefits. ❑ TSNRP should pilot test a collaborative project; evaluate its outcomes and feasibility before starting a collaborative program with other federal agencies, 	
Tasks	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Goal#1 Expand Cadre of Nursing Research: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ -By 2010, all consultants & specialty leaders will contact all AD PhD students to remind them of TSNRP submission process ○ -By 2011, establish an academy of experienced TS nurse researchers ○ -By 2012, 50% newly graduated PhD researchers will be assigned a mentor within 6 mo. ○ All consultants will contact all Duty Under Instruction (DUINS) Ph.D. students to remind them of the TSNRP submission process. ○ 50% of newly graduated Ph.D. researchers will be assigned a mentor within 6 months. ❑ Goal #3: Foster partnerships for collaborative research. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Explore the possibility of purchasing consulting time for research from academic institutions. ○ Develop at least one collaborative call for proposals across agencies (e.g., with the Department of Veterans Affairs). ○ By 2010, establish a formal database of researchers willing to collaborate with military researchers. ❑ Goal 4: Provide an infrastructure to stimulate and support nursing research and EBP. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Explore possibility of creating a database. ○ Explore possibility of (online) military research journal. ○ Explore possibility of collaboration with existing journals (e.g., supplements, columns) in various ways. ○ Expand training opportunities annually: online components of classes, revise and resubmit, journal/grants, EBP, post award ○ By 2010, identify completed studies and list of publications on TSNRP website. 	

DAY 2

OUTBRIEF TO THE NURSING CHIEFS

Work group discussions continued on Day 2. At the end of Day 2, participants briefed the Corps Chiefs on their small group discussions recommendations, as indicated above.

COL Susanne Clark, CAPT Pierce, and Col Thomas supported the proposed mission, vision, and strategic priorities. COL Clark commented that they are “right on target.” The deputies also supported TSNRP researchers desire to collaborate with academia; commenting that these relationships need to be formalized.

COL Clark asked whether the research interest groups might be international. LTC Kenny reported that these groups could be international. For example, TSNRP might sponsor symposia at Sigma Theta Tau and other conferences. In addition, TSNRP will participate in publishing a special military issue of *Nursing Clinics of North America* in the spring of 2010.

COL Clark was surprised to learn that no military nursing research journal exists and supported the proposal to start one. The journal could engage directors of nursing in inculcating novice researchers. COL Clark also approved of the proposal to establish a TSNRP academy, which is in line with MG Patricia Horoho’s priority of establishing a research system in the Army Nurse Corps. TSNRP should try to accelerate these two priorities.

LTC Kenny pointed out that researchers typically prefer to submit their articles to journals with a high-impact factor (one that is read by many people) and that the proposed military nursing journal is unlikely to have a high-impact factor. Participants offered the following suggestions to overcome this concern:

- ❑ Include international military nursing research manuscripts.
- ❑ Consider not calling it a journal; encourage investigators to continue to publish their findings in high-impact journals and use the proposed publication as a clearinghouse.
- ❑ Ask the president of the American Nurses Association to publish a military nursing research supplement.
- ❑ Inculcate military nurse researchers into research society meetings.

CAPT Pierce cautioned TSNRP about collaboration efforts, stating that use of the program’s funds will be scrutinized because of permanent funding. She stated that the program needs to establish a track record as a permanent fund utilizer before co-funded studies or models are designed and dollar are shared with other entities for cross-agency studies.

LTC Kenny reported that the AC would monitor the implementation process for the recommendations from this meeting. TSNRP will report on the process to the Corps Chiefs on a regular basis.

FAREWELLS

All the Corps Chiefs' Deputies thanked participants for the time and energy they committed to this process.

The conference was adjourned at 1130 on 4 February 2009.

ATTACHMENTS

A: Corps Chiefs Guidance

B: Evaluation of the 2005 Strategic Refinement Conference