

THE FLORIDA SENATE
2014 SUMMARY OF LEGISLATION PASSED
Committee on Health Policy

CS/CS/SB 1036 — Nursing Education Programs

by Education Committee; Health Policy Committee; and Senator Grimsley

The bill establishes a schedule for all registered nurse (RN) prelicensure education programs to become accredited by a specialized nursing accrediting agency that is recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education. The accrediting agencies that are currently recognized include the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education and the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing.

The bill requires an applicant for licensure who takes the exam more than 6 months after graduation to take a licensure examination preparatory course. The applicant may not use state or federal financial aid to pay for the course.

The bill revises the graduate passage rate a licensed practical nurse or RN education program which is not accredited must have in order to retain its approval from the Board of Nursing to operate. The rate must be based only on the results for first-time test takers who take the licensure examination within 6 months of graduation. In addition, the board must exclude the test scores of a student who transfers with 12 or more credits from a program that was terminated by the board, when it recalculates the passage rate of the school that accepts the transferring student. If a program falls below the required rate and has been placed on probation, the board is authorized to extend its probationary period for one year if the program is meeting a majority of the benchmarks in its plan for remediation. This would allow a program to continue operating for up to 3 years without being terminated. The bill extends the study of the implementation of the nursing program approval process to January 30, 2020.

In addition, the bill:

- Increases the limit on clinical training that can be by simulation from 25 percent to 50 percent; adds clinical simulation to the definition of clinical training, thereby allowing it to count toward the required amount; and specifies that the required clinical training be completed in the United States, the District of Columbia, or a possession or territory of the United States.
- Exempts a nurse who is certified by a health care specialty program that is accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies or Accreditation Board for Specialty Nursing Certification from the biennial continuing education requirement.
- Modifies the definition of practice of practical nursing to include the teaching of general principles of health and wellness to the public.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2014.

Vote: Senate 37-0; House 118-0