

Maryland  
Nursing Education Articulation  
Policies and Procedures Manual

Maryland Council of Deans and Directors  
Of  
Nursing Programs (MCDDNP)

April 2017

## Introduction

In 2010, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) in collaboration with the Institute of Medicine (IOM) published a report titled *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*. This report addressed the challenges facing the nursing education system and offered recommendations to help address these challenges.

One of the key recommendations of this IOM report was that ‘nurses should achieve higher education levels of education and training through an improved education system that promotes seamless academic progression’ (2010). Within this recommendation, the authors of the report state that there should be an increased number of nurses with a baccalaureate degrees as well as providing licensed practical nurses (LPNs) with a seamless transition to the associate’s degree in nursing (ADN), and bachelors of science with a major in nursing (BS/BSN).

In Maryland, the Associate to Bachelor’s (ATB) degree program has been developed to allow for dual admission and/or dual enrollment for students between institutions of higher learning. The ATB curriculum model is designed to increase learning opportunities for students by decreasing redundant courses, identifying courses that could be shared, and reducing the time to complete the bachelor’s degree. Objectives of ATB programs include reducing the financial burden on students that participate in academic progression models. Partner colleges and universities should collaborate to minimize costs and share responsibilities of advising, enrolling, and tracking the progress of ATB students.

The goal of this articulation plan is to create a pathway for nurses to advance their education, thereby creating a more highly educated nursing workforce. The purpose of the Maryland Education Articulation Plan is to set forth the guidelines for colleges and universities as they develop seamless academic progression models.

## Assumptions Underlying the Maryland Nursing Articulation Plan

1. While a core of nursing knowledge and skills exist that is basic to all education programs, “current healthcare reform initiatives call for a nursing workforce that integrates evidence-based clinical knowledge and research with effective communication and leadership skills. These competencies require increased education at all levels” (TricouncilEd statement, 2010).
  
2. Educational Program Definitions
  - a. Practical/Vocational Nursing Education

“Practical or vocational nursing programs are approved schools that prepare and qualify graduates to take the NCLEX-PN (National Council Licensure Examination-Practical Nurse) exam. Upon receipt of their license, graduates are entitled to be called a Licensed Practical (or Vocational) Nurse (LPN/LVN) and to provide nursing care under the supervision of a Registered Nurse (RN). Many licensed practical and vocational nurses are employed in long-term care facilities, where they may be the main providers of day-to-day care. LPN/LVN programs are typically offered in technical schools, high schools, or community colleges and they are usually 12 months in length, though they can vary from 10 to 18 months.” (NLN, 2010, p. 37)
  
  - b. Associate Degree Nursing Education

“Associate degree (AD) nursing education provides the basic education necessary become a registered nurse. Graduates are eligible to sit for the NCLEX-RN licensing examination and, if licensed, may practice in structured care settings, including hospitals, long-term care facilities, clinics and offices. Associate degree nursing education incorporates nursing knowledge, knowledge of key biological and social sciences, and study of humanities in a program that typically requires at least two years (65-75) credits of study in a junior or community college.” (NLN, 2010, p.37)

c. Diploma Nursing Education

“Diploma nursing programs have historically been based in hospitals, though today many affiliate with community colleges. These programs are two to three years in length, upon completion, graduates earn a diploma in nursing, may earn an associate degree in science from an affiliating junior college, and are eligible to sit for NCLEX-RN licensing examination. Like graduates of associate degree programs, graduates of diploma programs may work as RNs in structured care settings, including hospitals, long term care facilities, clinics, and offices.” (NLN, 2010, p. 38)

d. Baccalaureate Nursing Education

“Baccalaureate nursing programs require a minimum of four years (120-135 credits) of study in a senior college or university... In addition to providing students with foundational knowledge and skills needed for practice as a registered nurse, baccalaureate-nursing education includes learning experiences related to community and population-focused care, leadership and management, and research. Such programs also provide graduates with the foundation to enter graduate school, which today, might be a master’s program or doctoral program.” (NLN, 2010, p.39)

3. There are multiple entry points into the practice of nursing. The purpose of the Maryland Nursing Articulation Plan is to create a seamless academic progression model.
4. Each graduate of a Maryland registered nursing program will have a common core of learning experiences as required by Maryland Nursing Practice Act. (COMAR 10.27.03)
5. Each graduate of a Maryland practical nursing program will have a common core of learning experiences as required by the Maryland Nursing Practice Act (COMAR 10.27.03)

6. Nursing education programs participating in the Maryland Nursing Articulation Plan have met the curriculum requirements of the Maryland Board of Nursing (COMAR 10.27.03)
7. All Maryland public institutions offering a major in nursing will participate in the Maryland Nursing Articulation Plan. Private colleges and universities offering a major in nursing have the option to participate in the Maryland Nursing Articulation Plan.
8. All Maryland public associate degree institutions offering a major in nursing and diploma programs (prior to 2016) will participate in the Maryland Nursing Articulation Plan.
9. All Maryland public practical nursing programs will participate in the Maryland Nursing Articulation Plan.
10. Each institution has the responsibility to establish its mission, ensure integrity of the curriculum, establish admission, progression and graduation standards and monitor the quality of its graduates.

## References

- Consensus policy statement on the educational advancement of registered nurses* (2010). Tricouncil for Nursing. Retrieved: <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/media-relations/news-releases/2010/TricouncilEdStatement.pdf>
- Maryland Nurse Practice Act*. Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) Title 10, Subtitle 27
- Outcomes and competences for graduates of practical/vocational, diploma, associate degree, baccalaureate, master's, practice doctorate, and research doctorate programs in nursing* (2010). New York: National League for Nursing. Publication Date: 2012-11-30. ISBN/ISSN: 9781934758120

*The future of nursing: leading change, advancing health (2010)*. Retrieved:

<http://www.nationalacademies.org/hmd/Reprots/2010/The-Future-of-Nursing-Leading-Change-Advancing-Health.aspx>

# Maryland Nursing Articulation Model

## Criteria

### RN Direct Transfer Option

**Eligibility** RNs holding an active and unencumbered license in Maryland or a compact state, who graduated from a regionally accredited college or university

Institutions may enroll and grant credits according to the Maryland Nursing Articulation Model to RNs holding an active and unencumbered license from a non-compact state who have graduated from a nursing program approved by the originating board of nursing

**Credits** Credit for RN licensure: Students with an active unencumbered RN license will receive a block of 30 upper level credits applied towards the nursing major

Credit for General Education/Prerequisite courses: The baccalaureate degree granting institution will apply 57-60 credits of eligible general education or required prerequisite

coursework (COMAR 138.06.0603 Section A1). Private institutions can accept additional credits in accordance with Maryland Higher Education Commission guidelines

Credit for Nursing courses: The institution granting the baccalaureate degree will require 30-33 credits of nursing program requirements

Total required credits: No less than 120 credits are required to earn the baccalaureate degree with a major in nursing (COMAR 138.02.02.16)

#### Policies

According to the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR), content includes the arts and humanities, social and behavioral sciences, biological and physical sciences and mathematical sciences (COMAR 138.02.02.16)

The curriculum of baccalaureate in nursing programs will include: didactic and clinical experiences in community health nursing, study of nursing research and its application to nursing and study and practice of leadership and management (COMAR 10.27.03.13)



## Associate to Bachelor's Degree/Dual Admission Options

**Eligibility** Students accepted in Maryland Board of Nursing approved associate degree nursing programs who meet admission criteria of Maryland Board of Nursing approved nursing baccalaureate programs

**Credits** Partnering institutions will determine requirements for the Program of study. Nursing course credits may transfer

Credit for General Education/Prerequisite courses: The baccalaureate degree granting institution will apply 57-60 credits of eligible general education or required prerequisite coursework (COMAR 138.06.0603 Section A1). Private institutions can accept additional credits in accordance with Maryland Higher Education Commission guidelines

Credit for Nursing courses: The institution granting the baccalaureate degree will require 30-33 credits of nursing program requirements

Credit for RN licensure: Students will receive a block of 30 upper level credits applied towards the nursing major upon achieving an active, unencumbered RN license

Total required credits: No less than 120 credits are required to earn the baccalaureate degree with a major in nursing (COMAR 138.02.02.16)

## Policies

Students may be concurrently admitted and/or enrolled subject to the policies of the partnering institutions

Students may begin the upper division courses following admission to the ATB/dual enrollment/dual admission program and as determined by the partner institutions' plan of study

Partner schools should collaborate to determine efficient pathways for students to transition between Associate Degree and Bachelor of Science in nursing programs. However, each school reserves the right to amend its curriculum as necessary

Partner institutions should collaborate to examine ways to avoid duplication of fees and minimize student costs

## LPN Direct Transfer Option

Eligibility	Practical nurses with an active, unencumbered Maryland or compact LPN license articulating to the Associate Degree level
Credits	A maximum of one year of nursing courses in the associate degree program they are entering following successful completion of the program's transition course(s), if required
Policies	Students have met the criteria for participation in the articulation model

Revised: March 24, 2017

## Description of the Process Used to Develop Revision

*Background:* The Maryland Action Coalition (MDAC) was formed in 2011 as a response to the Institute of Medicine report *Future of Nursing (2010)*. Multiple projects have been funded in the intervening years to support the recommendations put forth in this seminal work.

One such project is this revision of the Maryland Nursing Education Articulation Plan. This project was funded through two grant sources. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation provided funds via a competitive grant process through the AARP Campaign for Action Future of Nursing State Implementation Plan IV (<https://campaignforaction.org/about/our-story/>). The second source was the MHEC Nursing Support Program II (NSP-II).

*Process:* The Project Director solicited a work group through the Maryland Council of Deans and Directors of Nursing Programs (MCDDNP). Six work group members were selected to represent various constituents (4-year college/university, community college, HBCU, rural, urban, and suburban).

The work group began meetings in 2015 and used an iterative process as the revisions were discussed and vetted. The Project Director took the working drafts to the MCDDNP quarterly meetings on four different occasions for feedback, comments and recommendations. Every Dean and Director of nursing programs in the state had access to the drafts and had multiple opportunities to discuss and amend the content of the document.

In December 2016, a final draft was presented to the MCDDNP. A sub-workgroup was convened to respond to concerns raised by the discussions at this session. The sub workgroup submitted recommendations at the February 2017 MCDDNP meeting. A special meeting was called in March to finalize the revision document.

In May 2017, an electronic survey was sent to all members of MCDDNP calling for a final vote on the revision. The revision of the articulation model was accepted with a 100% positive vote.



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November 3, 2017

Dr. Rebecca Wiseman, PhD, RN  
Chair, UMSON at Universities at Shady Grove  
University of Maryland School of Nursing  
9640 Gudelsky Drive, Room 313  
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Dr. Wiseman:

Thank you for providing the 2017 Maryland Nursing Education Articulation to the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC). The articulation agreement has been agreed to by Maryland nursing education programs through the Maryland Council of Deans and Directors of Nursing Programs (MCDDNP). The articulation agreement represents a very tangible step forward in nursing education articulation and you and the entire nursing education community are to be commended for this outstanding and clear agreement.

I am pleased to accept this promising articulation agreement for the nursing education community and fully endorse the agreement. It is a positive movement in assisting students toward completion in nursing education and their progress toward their degrees. We at the Commission will look to include the agreement in a prominent place on the MHEC website.

I would like to congratulate you, MCDDNP, and the entire nursing education community for taking this forward thinking and impactful step in nursing articulation on a statewide basis for Maryland nursing education.

Sincerely,

Dr. James D. Fielder  
Secretary

JDF:mjk

cc: Lee Towers, Executive Director, Department of Outreach for Public, Student, Legislative, and Corporate Relations, MHEC  
Emily A. A. Dow, Assistant Secretary for Academic Affairs, MHEC