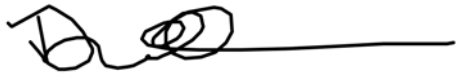
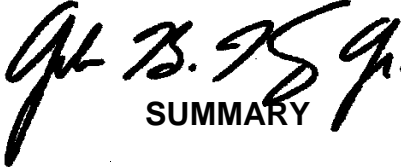




TO: The Honorable the Members of the Board of Regents
FROM: Douglas E. Lentivech 
SUBJECT: Montefiore School of Nursing at Montefiore New Rochelle Hospital: Associate in Science Degree in Nursing

DATE: December 13, 2013

AUTHORIZATION(S):


SUMMARY

Issue for Consent Agenda

Should the Board of Regents approve a proposed master plan for the Montefiore School of Nursing at Montefiore New Rochelle Hospital to offer a nursing program leading to the Associate in Science degree?

Reason(s) for Consideration

Required by State statute.

Proposed Handling

This question will come before the full Board at its December 2013 meeting where it will be voted on and action taken.

Procedural History

Approval of a master plan by the Board of Regents is required by Section 237 of the Education Law. This would be the institution's initial authorization to award a degree which makes a master plan necessary.

Background Information

Mount Vernon Hospital, the operator of the Dorothea Hopfer School of Nursing, an affiliate entity of Sound Shore Health System, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy on May 29, 2013. On November 6, 2013, the component entities of Sound Shore Health System, which included the School of Nursing, were acquired by Montefiore Health

System, which now consists of Montefiore New Rochelle Hospital, Montefiore Mount Vernon Hospital, and other entities. The School will be operated under the Montefiore New Rochelle Hospital corporation, in the site of the existing Nursing School at Montefiore Mount Vernon Hospital in Mount Vernon. Nursing education at Mount Vernon Hospital dates back to 1901, starting as a diploma program, and converting to a degree program in 1991. This action is to enable an orderly transition of the existing Dorothea Hopfer School of Nursing to the new owner under a new name, the Montefiore School of Nursing.

Purpose of the Program and the Relationship to the Mission: Montefiore's mission is rooted in its enduring commitment to provide high-quality care to all patients—regardless of their backgrounds or health insurance. Montefiore's unique care delivery model combines innovation, dedication and academic and community partnerships. Evidence of Montefiore's four-part mission, to heal, to teach, to discover, and to advance the health of the communities it serves, is its commitment to integrated clinical care and community service. Montefiore has a long history of providing care to residents of the Bronx and lower Westchester, employing over 3000 RNs. With the acquisition of Sound Shore Medical Center and Mount Vernon Hospital, Montefiore's bed base will expand from 1500 to 2000 beds. Montefiore is committed to hiring talented professionals including associate degree prepared nurses.

Montefiore also has extensive experience providing health care related education and training at its facilities. The Montefiore Medical Center is considered the University Hospital and Academic Medical Center for Albert Einstein College of Medicine, and provides residents and other health care professionals hands-on training in all aspects of medicine and patient care. The Center for Continuing Medical Education (CCME) at Montefiore and Einstein is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (AACME), and has provided a diverse array of continuing medical education courses and activities to practitioners for over 35 years. Montefiore also partners with a number of colleges to offer unique certificate programs in Bioethics and Medical Humanities, and offers interdisciplinary, professional development courses for nurses and allied health professionals within its health system.

The purpose of the proposed School of Nursing, previously known as the Dorothea Hopfer School of Nursing, is congruent with the mission of Montefiore Health Systems—to provide a quality nursing education anchored in the liberal arts and sciences and to service the local community. Historically, graduates of the Dorothea Hopfer program have performed above the State average on the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurse (NCLEX-RN). Since 2010, the pass rate for 196 first-time candidates is 90 percent. The new entity is committed to maintaining the tradition of the Hopfer School of Nursing by adopting its admission requirements, curriculum, faculty, staff and administrative structure.

Admissions Requirements: To be eligible for admission into the program, students must meet the following requirements:

- Submission of an official high school transcript indicating graduation and all official transcripts from schools previously attended. An average of 85 or higher is required if college course work is not evident.
- In the absence of high school graduation, submission of high school equivalency (GED).
- Successful completion (C or better) of one-year high school chemistry with lab or one semester of college chemistry with lab.
- Satisfactory score on TEAS entrance exam.
- Personal integrity and the potential for nursing as documented by one reference from a guidance counselor, teacher, employer, or member of the clergy.

Curriculum: The existing curriculum will be implemented. Mercy College will remain a joint registrant and provide instruction in the liberal arts and science courses. The curriculum consists of 69 credits (30 credits in liberal arts and science and 39 credits in the nursing major) to be completed in four academic semesters of full-time study. The liberal arts component includes course work in General Psychology, Sociology, English, Nutrition, Anatomy and Physiology, and Microbiology. The traditional professional nursing content is delivered in three ten-credit courses and one nine-credit course. The evening/weekend option affords a flexible schedule for primarily adult and second-degree students. Admission, progression, and completion requirements are the same for the day and evening/weekend students. The school will evaluate program performance based on established criteria that include: first-time candidate performance on the NCLEX-RN licensure exam; program completion; student, faculty and employer satisfaction.

Prospective Student Body and Projected Enrollment: Future enrollment is expected to reflect the current student body demographic—80% female; average age of 32; 48% from NYC borough and 45% from southern Westchester County; 47% African American, 22% Caucasian, 20% Hispanic, and 6% Asian. The new school plans to maintain the current enrollment rates of approximately 34 students each fall admission for day students, and 34 students in the spring for evening/weekend students.

Faculty and Staff: Montefiore will maintain the current cadre of five full-time teaching faculty and four part-time clinical faculty, all credentialed with a Master's of Science degree in nursing to assure continuity in the implementation of the curriculum. In addition, the school will be administered by a Dean and an Assistant Dean; the Assistant Dean will have teaching responsibilities.

Facilities, Equipment and Resources: The school will continue to operate in the current facilities, classrooms, and labs at Montefiore Mount Vernon Hospital. Clinical contracts are in place and have been expanded to include learning experiences at Montefiore Medical Center. Montefiore is committed to assist in the operation and administration of the existing school, currently operated by Mount Vernon Hospital, through the transition phase pending New York State Education Department approval.

Projected facility and equipment improvement expenditures are \$900,000 during the course of the next five years.

The United States Department of Education (USDE) revoked the School's certification for federal financial aid for enrolled students in response to Mount Vernon Hospital's filing of bankruptcy. The proposed Montefiore School of Nursing will offer an alternate loan program in the amount of each student's lost financial aid package. The proposed School has initiated the process for applying for Title IV funding with USDE under the new title and ownership, and is committed to providing the necessary resources to implement a successful nursing program.

Student Employment Prospects: The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that registered nursing will add the most jobs of any profession and grow by 26% by 2020. Montefiore is already experiencing growth in nursing, and recently hired over 260 RNs to fill existing or new positions. With continued growth as a health care delivery system, additional positions are anticipated in acute care, home care and ambulatory care programs. The preference for baccalaureate prepared nurses in the NYC metropolitan area has had a significant impact on the ability of associate degree graduates to be employed within a reasonable period following graduation. However, a four-year B.S. nursing program is not financially attainable for many potential students within the service area of the School of Nursing. The associate degree is a first step, allowing for employment and financial subsidies from employers, with the understanding that B.S.N. is the immediate next step.

Department staff reviewed the application materials, including the financial information, and conducted a site visit to assess the capacity of the new entity to operate the School of Nursing. In addition, a canvass was conducted of all institutions in the New York City and Hudson Valley regions. There was a single concern expressed that nurses with an Associate in Science degree may not find employment in the New York metropolitan region. The School has an articulation agreement with Mercy College to enable the students to receive a bachelor's degree in nursing after completing the associate degree.

Recommendation

The Department has determined that the proposed program meets the standards of registration as set forth in the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education. It is recommended that the Board of Regents approve the master plan for Montefiore School of Nursing at Montefiore New Rochelle Hospital to confer the Associate in Science degree on qualified graduates of the registered nursing program. This master plan would be effective until December 31, 2013, unless the Department registers the proposed program prior to that date, in which case, master plan shall be without term.

Timetable for Implementation

If the Board of Regents approves the master plan, the Department will register the proposed program, and the school will proceed to enroll students.