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Nursing students launch quickly into training

By Eric Reikowski, media relations assistant

The **Oakland University School of Nursing** (SON) recently implemented the St. John and Oakland University Assistant Readiness program (SOAR), an educational initiative designed to prepare students for careers as patient care technicians and enhance their prospects for further advancement within the nursing profession.

The program consists of 120 contact hours over a period of five weeks. Students receive three weeks of instruction on theory before moving on for two weeks of clinical instruction at Providence Hospital.

"For nursing students who wish to gain valuable nursing skills before they even begin the program, the SOAR program is ideal," said Linda Thompson Adams, dean of SON. "Hospitals will gain qualified patient care technicians and the nursing students will have the opportunity to begin their careers a little sooner."

The program's comprehensive curriculum seeks to develop a wide range of core competencies in nursing. Students learn to measure vital signs; monitor Foley, NG, peripheral IV and feeding tubes; administer daily care, including bathing, feeding and dressing; apply hot and cold treatments; admit, transfer and discharge patients; collect specimens; and care for patients recovering from operations, coping with chronic illnesses or facing death.

All SOAR participants have been admitted to SON, with some coming from the traditional bachelor of science in nursing program and others from the accelerated second degree program. To be admitted to SOAR, students must submit to a drug screening, background check, physical examination and immunization. Students also complete health care certification work on the first day of class.

The SOAR program was launched in November with a cohort of eight students. A second cohort of 20 students will begin in January. All participants who successfully complete the program are eligible for hire as patient care technicians at St. John's Hospital.

For more information on the SOAR program, contact Jaime Sinutko at (248) 370-2761 or rsinutko@oakland.edu.

SUMMARY

The SOAR program prepares students for careers as patient care technicians and enhances their prospects for further advancement within the nursing profession.

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