

Request for Charge to Convene a Differentiated Essential Competencies of Graduates of Texas Nursing Programs Workgroup

Summary of Request:

Consider this request to issue a charge to Board Staff to convene a workgroup comprised of nursing education and practice stakeholders to review and update the *Differentiated Essential Competencies of Graduates of Texas Nursing Programs (DECs) Evidenced by Knowledge, Clinical Judgments, and Behaviors*.

Historical Perspective:

- A statewide set of competencies for vocational and professional nursing program graduates originated by a Texas Legislature mandate in 1988.
- The Nursing Education Advisory Committee (now ACE) was charged to establish a set of minimum performance expectations of graduates.
- Representatives from the Texas Board of Vocational Nurse Examiners and the Texas Board of Nurse Examiners jointly developed the set of competencies between 1990 and 1992. The original competency document, the *Essential Competencies of Texas Graduates of Education Programs*, was published in 1993.
- Two subsequent versions of the competencies followed: the 2002 *Differentiated Entry Level Competencies (DELCS)* and the 2010 *Differentiated Essential Competencies (DECs)*.
- The DECs are required to be integrated into nursing education programs in Texas by rule. All programs include the DECs in their curriculum and many base their course and clinical objectives on the DECs. The DECs provide a common standard for nursing program outcomes and graduate preparation.

Rationale for Request:

- Though the competencies were developed to provide criteria that have remained stable over time, the document should be updated to assure inclusion of current practices, research, and advances in nursing.
- An updated DECs will provide a current set of uniform basic, essential competencies for all new graduate nurses that will not only set a standard but will provide guidelines for the practice setting regarding the utilization of new graduate nurses.

Staff Recommendation:

Charge Board Staff to convene a workgroup comprised of nursing education and practice stakeholders to review and update the *Differentiated Essential Competencies of Graduates of Texas Nursing Programs* based on current literature, standards, and educational processes.