# Post-Sabbatical Report

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Spring 2020

**Summary**

### Preparation and Planning for Sabbatical

The preparation for my sabbatical began long before my sabbatical leave. In August of 2017, I enrolled in the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program at Washington State University Vancouver (WSUV). I enrolled as a part-time student and worked on a planned program of study taking three to six credits per semester with a planned completion date in May of 2020.

The planning for my final, year-long DNP project began in the winter of 2019. In November of 2018, I attended a luncheon and was introduced to the Vice President of Nursing and Chief Nurse Officer at Legacy Salmon Creek Medical Center, Dr. Kelly Espinoza. Dr. Espinoza shared about their innovative Interprofessional Dedicated Education Unit (IPDEU) that was being launched. I was intrigued and wanted to learn more about this model. I stayed in contact with Dr. Espinoza and was invited to participate on a team of core stakeholders implementing the project. During the summer of 2019 I took the first of three DNP project courses. As part of the coursework, a formalized project proposal was submitted to the WSU College of Nursing for an internal review and to the Legacy Health Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval. The proposal received approval from the College of Nursing and an exemption from the Legacy IRB.

Also during the summer of 2019, focus groups were held with the clinical and academic partners from each discipline involved in the IPDEU project. I attended the focus groups and gleaned information about support and resources needed by the multi-disciplinary stakeholders to best support interprofessional students. I had initially envisioned designing an intervention to support the IPDEU staff, however, the timeline for the DNP coursework was too brief allow for implementation and evaluation of such an intervention. Through exploration with the team, it was noted that the pilot IPDEU with nursing and social work students had been in place for nearly a year and while the team had planned expansion to additional disciplines, no evaluation of the pilot had been completed. My project focus shifted to a program evaluation to identify evidence-based recommendations for the expansion of the IPDEU at Legacy Salmon Creek.

During the fall of 2019, I began the implementation and data collection for a mixed methods program evaluation of the IPDEU model using the RE-AIM framework (Glasgow, Vogt and Boles, 1999). The program evaluation was designed to be holistic yet emphasized patient and staff outcomes. Measures included patient outcomes such as average length of stay, readmission rates, harm event rates including falls, falls with injury and hospital acquired pressure injury (HAPI) and patient satisfaction as measured in specific domains of the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) survey (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, 2019). Staff outcomes included staff engagement scores, data from a mixed methods survey and scores from the Interprofessional Socialization and Valuing Scale-21 (ISVS-21) (King, Orchard, Khalili and Avery, 2016). Focused and intensive project work over the course of a year laid the foundation for the final semester of coursework, most of which was completed during my sabbatical leave.

**Project Products and Accomplishments**

During the sabbatical leave, I was able to bring the deliverables for my final course of the Doctor of Nursing Practice program to near completion. These include a SQUIRE manuscript, Executive Summary and Final PowerPoint presentation (SQUIRE, 2017). I completed the final phase of a year-long project in partnership with Legacy Salmon Creek Medical Center and the University of Portland. I graduated from Washington State University with a DNP on May 9, 2020. Additionally, through the coursework for my degree, I received a Graduate Certificate in Nursing Leadership which will further enhance my work as the Nursing Department Chair.

### Research

The underlying problem being addressed by the IPDEU model is medical errors caused by communication failures. Medical errors and complications occur at a rate unacceptable in our modern healthcare system. Worldwide, a staggering ten percent of patients suffer adverse medical events and roughly seven percent of those are fatal (Schwendimann, Blatter, Dhaini, Simon and Ausserhofer, 2018). Medical errors threaten the health and safety of Americans and reports attribute 30 percent of errors in the American healthcare system to failures in communication between healthcare providers or between providers and patients (The Joint Commission, 2017). The Joint Commission has focused on communication surrounding handoffs of patient information noting that the average American teaching hospital may have 4000 handoffs per day (The Joint Commission, 2017). The opportunity for miscommunication in the fast-paced world of healthcare is very high and mistakes can be deadly.

This project took place within an inpatient medical unit which houses an innovative pilot, IPDEU, a model for interprofessional education and enhanced interprofessional collaboration. The pilot was implemented in August of 2018, and no formal evaluation was completed prior to this program evaluation project. Expansion of the IPDEU is currently in progress, making a program evaluation a worthwhile endeavor.

There are limited examples of IPDEU in the literature. Those that have been documented report outcomes of improved communication and deeper understanding among disciplines (McVey, Vessey, Kenner and Pressler, 2014). Similarly, Visser, Kusurkar, Croiset, ten Cate and Westerveld describe an IPDEU involving medicine, nursing, pharmacy and physical therapy students. Each of the disciplines involved expressed enhanced motivation for interprofessional collaboration. Medical students appreciated the responsibility they were given and the opportunity to receive feedback from their supervisor as well as other disciplines. Nursing students noted that it was helpful to better understand what information is important to other professions while physical therapy and pharmacy students noted that the gained feelings of competence by adding their professional insights to rounding (Visser, Kusurkar, Croiset, ten Cate and Westerveld, 2019).

East Carolina University has implemented an interprofessional preceptor development course for their rural health programs. They report that the training of the preceptors stimulated enhanced collaboration among interprofessional providers and promoted improved communication (Clay, Lilley, Borre and Harris, 1999). These findings point to the potential for the IPDEU to influence changes in professional practice and drive improvements in patient outcomes.

### Self-enrichment

The project completed during my sabbatical leave was the culmination of years of work in pursuit of a doctor of nursing practice degree. Throughout the process, I have learned a great deal about interprofessional work, dedicated education units and evidence-based decision making. I have also strengthened my leadership skills and understanding of the role and contributions of advanced practice nurses. I am grateful for the opportunities and support I have had to advance my education and professional skillset.

The timing of my sabbatical leave was also personally fulfilling as my first child was born in May of 2019 and the sabbatical leave allowed me to spend more time with him while pursuing my educational goals. I have grown personally and professionally during my leave and come back to the college with gratitude and desire to engage in the meaningful work of enhancing clinical and community partnerships for the nursing department.

**Sabbatical Activities: Weekly Account**

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| **Week** | **Dates** | **Activities** |
| 1 | 1/6-1/12/20 | * Introduced to Desiree McCue, Chair of the Northwest Organization of Nurse Leaders (NWONL) council. Invited to participate in a panel on local Dedicated Education Unit Projects with Legacy, University of Portland and Providence. * Correspondence with clinical and academic mentors about this opportunity. |
| 2 | 1/13-1/19/20 | * Prepare abstract for Western Institute of Nursing Research Conference to be held in Portland, OR in April 2020. * Communicate with clinical and academic mentors about abstract, review and revise. Phone meetings and email communication. * First week of NURS 559, final course required for DNP degree. Reading and preparation for class session. * Attended class on site at WSUV. * Submitted an application for WSU foundation scholarship for graduate nursing student dissemination of research to fund attendance at WIN conference. |
| 3 | 1/20-1/26/20 | * I received notification that my abstract had been accepted for the WSU College of Nursing Research and Innovation Poster Display at the WIN Conference. * Approval for dissemination scholarship was received. * Additional phone and email communication with clinical and academic mentors related to the WIN poster presentation and the panel presentation for NWONL. There were several posters planned for presentation at the WIN conference from other team members related to the IPDEU project. * Data analysis for patient outcome data related to falls and falls with injury. Created X bar S charts to more closely examine change over time. * Communication with leadership team at Legacy Salmon Creek regarding requested data for program evaluation. |
| 4 | 1/27-2/2/20 | * Continued with data analysis. Created X bar S chart for hospital acquired pressure injuries (HAPI). * Reviewed content from class sessions on statistical measures. Reviewed t tests, ran descriptive statistics in excel and ran t tests for the patient harm event data. * Created initial draft of project poster for WIN. Reviewed with clinical and faculty mentor, received feedback. * Attended IPDEU core team meeting. * Work on final SQUIRE manuscript, results section. |
| 5 | 2/3-2/9/20 | * Correspondence with IPDEU team members about the WIN posters related to the project. * Data analysis for employee engagement survey and Press Ganey patient survey data. * Correspondence with IPDEU team members and clinical mentor about data analysis. * Compiled program evaluation results into PowerPoint slides and shared with clinical and faculty mentor. * Continue to work on final manuscript. |
| 6 | 2/10-2/16/20 | * Consultation with Program Evaluation and Mixed Methods expert, Dr. Linda Eddy. * Prepare for work session with IPDEU unit manager. * Begin design of research poster for WIN. |
| 6 | 2/17-2/23/20 | * Ongoing communication with IPDEU team, clinical mentor and faculty mentors about data analysis and results. * Work session with IPDEU clinical manager to gain context and validation about data. * Continue work on poster design. * Add context to final manuscript and PowerPoint slides. |
| 8 | 2/24-3/1/20 | * Develop visuals and refine control charts for inclusion in poster and presentations. * Progress update meeting with faculty mentor, received feedback on poster. * Continue to refine poster. * Draft poster sent to clinical mentor and IPDEU team for feedback. * Develop PowerPoint slides for presentation at NWONL. * Add updated figures and charts to manuscript, refine narrative. |
| 9 | 3/2-3/8/20 | * Collaboration with IPDEU unit manager, Colette Reilly in preparation for panel presentation at the NWONL meeting. * Presented at the NWONL meeting. * Edits and revisions to final manuscript. * NURS 559 class session via Zoom. |
| 10 | 3/9-3/15/20 | * Review data and timelines. Reached back to clinical mentor and IPDEU team for missing data points (some data collection from clinical agency was delayed and some became unavailable due to COVID-19 response). * Consultation with faculty mentor related to final results and analysis as well as missing data point. * Repeated lit searches for relevant new publications before finalizing manuscript draft. * Finalize manuscript draft and submit to faculty mentor for feedback. |
| 11 | 3/16-3/23/20 | * Draft Executive Summary. * Draft final presentation slides. |

**Sabbatical Objectives**

The primary objective of my sabbatical project was collaborate with Legacy Salmon Creek (LSC) Medical Center leaders and staff, University of Portland (UP) and Washington State University (WSU) faculty to design and implement interprofessional learning activities and curriculum and evaluate the program with regard to student learning and patient experience. Due to guidelines for the DNP project courses, feedback from my faculty mentor and a needs assessment at the clinical agency, this objective was modified to completion of a mixed methods program evaluation of the pilot phase of the IPDEU as opposed to developing an intervention. The program evaluation was successful, highlighted the strengths of the model and provided meaningful recommendations to the IPDEU team for the expansion of the model to include additional disciplines.

A secondary objective was to complete the DNP coursework and obtain a DNP degree from WSUV. This objective was met. I graduated with my DNP on May 9, 2020.

**Benefit to Students, Nursing Department and Clark College**

Quality clinical education is essential for a successful nursing program and my work during sabbatical positions me to guide the nursing department in pursuing enhanced clinical opportunities in our community. Prior to my sabbatical leave, there had been discussion with leadership at PeaceHealth Southwest Medical Center about a closer partnership and possibly a dedicated education unit (DEU). My work with the IPDEU team at LSC has provided me the opportunity to see a successful model in place and learn from the pioneers of DEUs as clinical placements for nursing students. This will help inform the Clark College Nursing department as we explore partnerships PeaceHealth and other clinical partners in the future. As a result of my work with the IPDEU team, I bring important context and learning about interprofessional education back to my department, unit and the college. Through my project, I have formed a positive working relationship with Dr. Kelly Espinoza at Legacy Salmon Creek where some of our students complete clinical rotations. Nursing and other health professions students at Clark College will benefit from interprofessional learning and enhanced clinical opportunities in our community.

Completion of a doctorate in nursing is beneficial to the department as we continue to explore concurrent enrollment programs (CEP) that will allow Clark College nursing students to enroll in a RN to BSN program while completing their AA in Nursing DTA/MRP degree at Clark. This positions our students with a competitive advantage of streamlined completion of a baccalaureate degree while the majority of their coursework carries community college tuition and fees.

**Partnerships**

I could not have completed this project without strong partnerships. My faculty advisor, Dr. Linda Eddy and faculty mentor, Dr. Renee Hoeksel at Washington State University Vancouver served as strong mentors and provided support and encouragement throughout my time in the DNP program and particularly as I completed the final project. My clinical mentor, Dr. Kelly Espinoza welcomed me into the IPDEU team at Legacy Salmon Creek Medical Center. She ensured that I had access to the data needed to complete a comprehensive program evaluation. The IPDEU team included faculty from the University of Portland who were welcoming and supportive of my efforts and shared their expertise and experience related to the development of dedicated education units. The team as whole offered committed partnership, supporting the completion of the program evaluation project and inspiring me to carry on despite challenges.

**Scholarships**

I am honored to have received the Anna and Dwight Sr. Schwab Charitable Foundation Scholarship which covered the tuition and fees for my final two semesters of the DNP program in full. Additionally, after my abstract was accepted for a poster presentation at the Western Institute of Nursing (WIN) 2020 Research and Information Exchange, I was awarded the Carl M. Hansen Foundation Scholarship to fund my attendance at the WIN 2020 conference to disseminate my work. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the conference was canceled and I ultimately did not accept the funds.

It is also important for me to acknowledge the generous support I received during the semesters leading up to my final year of the DNP program, I received tuition reimbursement from the Hilma Speights’ endowment funds held by the Clark College Foundation. I cannot state enough how grateful I am for the support I have received from generous donors to support my academic pursuits and strengthen my skills as a nurse educator here at Clark College.

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