

The nursing profession and nurse educators have long stressed the importance of preparing nursing students to work with a diversity of patient populations. In my opinion the poverty simulation process and experience can provide to students and curriculum the ability to address some of the core competencies of professional nursing organizations (Quad Council, AACN, and NLN).

### **Quad Council of Public Health Nursing Competencies**

**“Communicates with cultural sensitivity”** (p.5). The simulation can enable students to think about socioeconomic status and social class factors through increased awareness of those factors which can further assist them in communicating with more sensitivity to individuals and families they serve in their professional practice.

**“Communicate effectively with individuals, families, groups, and as a member of inter-professional teams”** (p.5). Although the students perform the roles of family members in those roles they need to interact and communicate with a variety of health care professionals representing community agencies. These interactions help them understand the resources in the community available to the populations they serve and how to make appropriate referrals in their direct care roles as case managers, as advocates, or as case finders providing follow-up services.

**Dimensions of Practice Skills:** “Utilize an ecological perspective in health assessment, planning and interventions with individuals, families or groups” (p.7). Additional competencies in this domain may be addressed through the poverty simulation or can be achieved through pre-post simulation assignments. “Partners effectively with key stakeholders and groups in care delivery to individuals, families and groups”; Participates effectively in activities that facilitate community involvement”; “Describes to individuals, families and groups the role of government, the private and non-profit sectors in the delivery of community health services”; “Seek input from individuals, families and groups and incorporates it into their plan of care”; “Identifies opportunities for advocacy for individual and family focused interventions,” and lastly, “Utilizes community assets and resources to promote health and to deliver care to individual, families and groups.”

**Cultural Diversity:** “Utilizes social determinants of health to work effectively with diverse individuals families and groups”; “Adapts public health nursing care to individuals, families, and groups based on cultural needs and difference”; “Explains factors contributing to cultural diversity”; “Articulates the benefits of a diverse public health workforce”; “Demonstrates culturally appropriate public health nursing practice with individuals, families, peers, and community members. (Verbalized in focus group comments).

**Leadership and Systems Thinking:** In this domain the simulation can address two competencies for students, “Uses individual, team and organizational learning opportunities for personal and professional development as a public health nurse, and “Adapts public health nursing care delivery in consideration of changes in the public health system, and the larger social, political and economic environment” (pgs.13-14).

**The NLN:** One of the core competencies of the NLN (Competency four) indicates that the nurse educator must prepare nursing graduates for practice that reflects “current nursing and health care trends, and community and societal needs” (<https://www.nln.org/index.cfm> [p. 4]).

**The AACN** Essentials guidelines (2008) emphasize the need to educate nurses who are able to understand the “changing demographics of patient populations” (p. 6) and are sensitive to a diverse population which includes not only race, ethnicity, culture, spirituality, and gender, but also socioeconomic status and health disparities; advocate for social justice, including a commitment to the health of vulnerable populations and the elimination of health disparities (p. 25) . Additionally, the AACN guidelines note that the baccalaureate nurse should be able to conduct comprehensive...socio-economic and environmental assessments of health and illness parameters... (p. 31); understand the “complex interrelationships of determinants of health (p. 37); and design interventions that “improve the health of a collection of individuals” (p. 38).

According to the AACN Baccalaureate programs prepare the graduate to: Reflect on one’s own beliefs and values as they relate to professional practice”, (AACN p. 28); and “Recognize the impact of attitudes, values, and expectations on the care of the very young, frail older adults, and other vulnerable populations”, (p. 28).