Advancing the Nursing Community in New Mexico
Established in 2003, the New Mexico Center for Nursing Excellence (NMCNE) has been an influential force in New Mexico. The NMCNE works to create partnerships and programs that advance the nursing community’s capacity to meet New Mexico’s current and future health and healthcare needs.

The NMCNE focuses on four primary areas:

- Support nursing education/faculty
- Promote professional development of nurses throughout their careers
- Enhance the image of nursing/honor nurses
- Grow the NMCNE

The NMCNE is a 501c3 nonprofit organization, independent of any healthcare organizations, providers, educational institutions or government agencies. As such, the NMCNE is considered a neutral party regarding nursing issues. The NMCNE is governed by a Board of Directors representing a variety of nursing constituents and healthcare industry from around the state.

**NMCNE ROLE AS CONVENER/FACILATOR WITHIN THE NURSING COMMUNITY**

As an independent, neutral organization, the NMCNE is in a unique position to serve as a convener of a variety of stakeholders around nursing issues.

In 2008, in partnership with the New Mexico Board of Nursing, the NMCNE worked with New Mexico First to orchestrate six town halls around the state. In the preceding 5 years, there had been numerous state level meetings that addressed concerns for a nursing workforce shortage, each meeting creating a set of recommendations. Even with over 50 recommendations, very little was actually being accomplished as ownership of the recommendations was vague. During the meetings, attendees were asked to prioritize the recommendations and develop a strategy or structure to be focused on acting on the recommendations. As a result, a strategic plan was developed and the Nursing Council of New Mexico was created.

The **Nursing Council of New Mexico** was established in 2009 as a volunteer group of nurses and other stakeholders to take the work of the town halls and “turn talk into action”. Within the first year, the Nursing Council of New Mexico: Hosted the first annual nursing faculty conference; Researched opportunities and
Created a partnership with Idaho State University to bring a rural nurse residency program to New Mexico; Created a website for nurses interested in coming to New Mexico with information about licensure, employment, and lifestyle in NM.

**Legislative Memorials.** Over the past decade, the NMCNE has been a champion of nursing education and education reform. In partnership with the NM Board of Nursing, the NMCNE hosted and facilitated two legislative memorials regarding nursing education: HJM 40: The Impact of Nursing Instructors on the Status of Nursing in NM” (2009), and HM 50, “Statewide Plan for Nursing Education” (2010). The results of these memorials supported the development of the New Mexico Nursing Education Consortium (NMNEC). With all NM public nursing education programs as members, the NMNEC has developed a state plan for nursing education that increases access to bachelor nursing education across the state through a common, integrated associate and bachelor nursing curriculum. Integral to the plan are partnerships between community colleges and universities that provide community colleges with the option of offering both an associate and bachelor degree program in the local community. The NMNEC curriculum promotes efficient and shared use of faculty and other educational resources. Equally important, the NMNEC has created a forum for all nursing education programs to address educational issues.

**New Mexico Action Coalition.** In October 2010, the Institute of Medicine released its report “The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health”. This landmark work for nursing outlined eight major recommendations in education, practice and leadership that would impact health through nursing. In response to the IOM report, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the AARP Foundation joined forces to create the national Future of Nursing: Campaign for Action (CFA). A primary focus of the CFA was to establish state or regional coalitions to advance the IOM recommendations. New Mexico, through the NMCNE, applied and was one of the first states accepted as a coalition state in February 2011. The NMCNE serves as the nursing co-lead and administrator for the NM Action Coalition (NMAC.)

The Nursing Council of New Mexico and Nursing Action Coalition met separately and jointly to develop a plan for joining together in addressing the IOM recommendations. Through the work of the NMCNE, the Nursing Council of New Mexico, the New Mexico Organization of Nurse Leaders, and the New Mexico Nursing Education Consortium, many of the recommendations were already being addressed.

As the NMAC has evolved, it has grown into a statewide partnership of nurses, state government agencies, local business, and consumer stakeholders that are committed to improve health and promote health equity. Its goal is to cultivate the overall health of New Mexicans by convening interested parties and facilitating discussion and collaborations that bridge statewide efforts. The NMAC is composed of over 75 members representing 30 organizations.

The NMAC’s mission strives to provide strategic direction through community collaboration and grassroots efforts with key stakeholders to transform the health of New Mexico.
The New Mexico Action Coalition will focus on these four pillars in building a *Culture of Health* in our state:

- Promote healthy living / health careers for children and youth.
- Facilitate and support community health opportunities.
- Identify and connect resources to address the social determinants of health and physiological needs.
- Develop nurse management / leadership trainings that will prepare nurses for leadership roles both in their organizations and in their communities.

**STRATEGIC GOAL: SUPPORT NURSING EDUCATION AND FACULTY**

**Nightingale Scholarships.** In 2004, the NMCNE partnered with the National League of Nursing (NLN) New Mexico chapter to administer the Nightingale Scholarships. Fifteen (15) $1,000 scholarships are awarded each year to nursing students in practical, associate degree, bachelor degree, and graduate degree nursing education programs. The New Mexico Board of Nursing (NMBON) has been a valuable partner over the years in ensuring that the scholarships are fully funded through grants from the NMBON Nursing Excellence Fund. The Nightingale Scholarship program has grown to include other partners in awarding additional scholarships, such as the New Mexico Association of Home and Hospice Care and the New Mexico Critical Care Nursing Association. Nursing students must have completed one semester or eight hours of nursing courses and be a student in a NM school or working in NM as a nurse. Criteria for selection for a scholarship include grade point average, recommendations by faculty, a student essay, community involvement and financial need. With the 2017 campaign, over 100 students will have received Nightingale Scholarships.

**Nursing Educators Conference.** In 2009, the NMCNE hosted the first nursing faculty conference to provide professional development for New Mexico’s nursing faculty. A second, equally important, goal of the conference is to provide a forum for nursing faculty from around the state to network and learn from each other. Now in its fourth year and drawing over 160 attendees, the faculty conference has transformed to the educators conference, welcoming education leaders from clinical partners. The educator conference has partnered with the New Mexico Nursing Education Consortium, the NM Board of Nursing and other stakeholders to prepare nurse educators for the NMNEC concept based, common curriculum being rolled out over the next 2-4 years.

**New Mexico Nursing Education Consortium.** The NMCNE takes pride in setting the stage for the creation of the New Mexico Nursing Education Consortium and supports the work of the NMNEC as an associate member and as co-lead for the NM Action Coalition.

**STATEGIC GOAL: PROMOTE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Professional Development.** Based on feedback from nurse leaders, the NMCNE focused on two areas for professional development: preceptor and leadership education. The NMCNE has provided preceptor development independently and through Idaho State University’s Northwest Rural Nurse Residency Program. Preceptor development is highly valued by nurse leaders and continues as a priority for the NMCNE. The NMCNE also developed two series of leadership classes; the fine-day Foundational Leadership series has been very successful within healthcare organizations by giving attendees the opportunity to reflect and explore their leadership philosophies and goals.

The NMCNE is an approved nurse continued education provider through the New Mexico Nurses Association. In the last 3 years alone, the NMCNE provided over 56 contact hours to nearly 1,000 attendees at educational events.
Lecture series. In 2012 the NMCNE established the NMCNE Lecture Series to bring nationally renowned experts on current nursing issues to New Mexico nurses. We have been privileged to host:

- Dr. Peter Buerhaus, PhD, RN, FAAN, Valere Potter Distinguished Professor of Nursing at Vanderbilt University School of Nursing, and Director of the Center for Interdisciplinary Health Workforce Studies, the Institute for Medicine and Public Health, at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. Presentation: “The Nursing Workforce”. Dr. Buerhaus joined us again in 2015 with “the Future of the Nursing Workforce in the Era of Health Care Reform.”

- Dr. Karlene Kerfoot, PhD, RN, Vice President of Nursing at API Healthcare. Presentation: Evidence Based Nurse Staffing: Another Perspective to Staffing Conversations

- Jean Watson, PhD, RN, AHN-BC, FAAN, Founder/Director Watson Caring Science Institute, a non-profit Foundation; Distinguished Professor Emerita, Dean Emerita, University of Colorado Denver, College of Nursing, Anschutz Medical Center. Presentation: “Caring Science/Heart Science: Restoring Authentic Heart-Centered Knowledgeable Caring. A Living Model of Transformation for Self and System”.

- Margo Karsten, PhD, MS, BSN, CEO of Creative Health Care Management. Presentation: “Taking Care of Others...Taking Care of Self.”

- Barbara Damron, PhD, RN, FAAN, Director, Office of Community Partnerships and Cancer Health Disparities, UNM Cancer Center; Associate Professor, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Nursing & Health Policy Collaborative, UNM college of Nursing. Presentation: “Health Care Reform: What Every Nurse Needs to Know.”


- Julie Willems Van Dijk, PhD, RN, Co-Director, County Health Ranking and Roadmaps, Associate Scientist, University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. Presentation: “Population Health: A Nursing Call to Action.”

- Linda Aiken, PhD, FAAN, FRCN, RN, Claire M. Fagin Leadership Professor in Nursing, Professor of Sociology, Director, Center for Health Outcomes and Policy Research, University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing. Presentation: “Using evidence to Address what Keeps Nurse Leaders Up at Night.”

- Judith Berg, MS, RN, FACHE, President and Executive Director, HealthImpact California. Presentation: “A Culture of Health and the Value of Nursing.”
The signature event of the NMCNE is the New Mexico Nursing Excellence Awards. Established in 2005, the NM Nursing Excellence Awards grew out of the NM March of Dimes “Nurse of the Year” program. The NM Nursing Excellence Awards honors nurses from around the state for excellence in nursing practice. Awards include:

- 21 awards for excellence in practice
- 5 Nursing Legends awards – recognizing retired New Mexico nurses for their dedication to the profession and contributions to New Mexico.
- Touch a Life award – nominated by a patient or family member, this award honors the impact that nurses have on the patients they serve.
- Friend of Nursing – this award acknowledges an individual, who is not a nurse, for their support and advancement of nursing and nurses.
- Distinguished Nurse of the Year – the top award, this award honors the “best of the best”.

The NM Nursing Excellence Awards enjoy the support of over 25 sponsors from around the state. Over the years, the NMCNE has built a reputation of being a “go-to” organization for nursing. Whether the media or legislators and staff, the NMCNE provides a neutral view of issues and provides information and referrals to nursing experts. The NMCNE has been invited to testify before state legislative committees, talked with state and federal elected officials on nursing issues, and written editorials on nurse-related issues.

**Enhance the Image of Nursing.** Over the years, the NMCNE has built a reputation of being a “go-to” organization for nursing. Whether the media or legislators and staff, the NMCNE provides a neutral view of issues and provides information and referrals to nursing experts. The NMCNE has been invited to testify before state legislative committees, talked with state and federal elected officials on nursing issues, and written editorials on nurse-related issues.

**Honor Cards.** The Honor Card program was established to acknowledge individual nurses throughout the year on a personal level while supporting the NMCNE. Through the NMCNE website, individuals can make a donation to the NMCNE in honor of a colleague, friend, or caregiver. The honored nurse receives a personalized card in the mail that a gift has been made in their honor, including the personal message from the donor.
GROWTH OF THE NMCNE

In 2005 the NMCNE began with a part time executive director working out of her home! Today, while we still have a budgeted position for a part time executive director, we also have a full-time assistant director and have an established office in Albuquerque. In that first year (2005) the activities of the executive director were primarily focused on the NM Nursing Excellence Awards. As demonstrated in this report, the NMCNE has grown significantly in its scope and influence. The Board of Directors and staff have embraced this growth and continually evaluate how best to support the NMCNE’s mission with the resources available.

Budget. The NMCNE has a fiscal year of January through December. The annual operational budget is strictly income versus expense budget and does not take into account restricted funds or cash reserves. The NMCNE Board of Directors have established a balanced budget policy for the operational budget.

Revenue. Over the period of 2012-2013 the NMCNE has budgeted an average of $316k in revenue, while actualizing $16-40k over budget. Net profit exceeded budgeted projections by nearly $14k.

As funding sources have become more restricted over the years, the NMCNE has moved to a model that relies more on earned income. Although grants are still sought for various projects, the Center is offering more educational offerings which contribute greatly to its revenue stream. In 2012 earned income accounted for 30% of total revenue with an increase to 32% the following year.

Fundraising. The Board of Directors make a financial commitment to the NMCNE in addition to their time and talent contributions. Every board member is expected to contribute financially to the NMCNE as one of their top philanthropic organizations.

As the NMCNE does not receive any operational funding from the State of New Mexico nurse licensure fees, the NMCNE relies on earned income, special events and donations to advance its mission.