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Addressing Nursing Workforce Challenges in South Dakota

Department of Labor Nursing Expansion Grant

May 27, 2026



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DOL 5-year Nursing Expansion Grant



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The overarching purpose of the Nursing Expansion grant project is to create a worker-centered partnership around the nursing workforce to improve training, move toward good quality jobs, and address issues that contribute to the critical nursing shortage

***We are in year 3 of this 5-year grant*



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Goal 1: Convene the SDNN as a worker-centered sector strategy organization that will oversee implementation of project efforts & become a sustainable organization

[SDNN web site link](#)



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Goal 2

Support the
development of a
nursing workforce that
is representative of the
state



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**Goal 3: Credential 128 BSN &
MSN nurses**

***tuition reimbursement &
support funds**

CNA to BSN
LPN to BSN
RN to BSN
BSN to MSN

SDNN Action Teams



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Action Team I: Support the development of a nursing workforce that is representative of the state through targeted recruitment activities.

Action Team II

Improve training to engage healthcare stakeholders and education institutions in the adoption and training for high demand nursing positions.

Mental health nursing



Mental Health Nurse Panels



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Nurses from:

HSC

Avera Behavior Health

Lewis & Clark

Lifescape

Monument Health

USD faculty

Speak Network

Pivot Point

... and more



Feedback from students

*Very interesting. This was not a nursing specialty I have ever really thought of. All the different stories were very interesting.

*This was a really good panel. I learned a lot about mental health. I have been thinking about going into mental health nursing and this definitely persuaded me more! Thank you!

*I really liked hearing about the different departments mental health nurses can work in. I didn't know much about this and the panel gave great insights

*Awesome opportunities and benefits from being a mental health nurse.

*They really answered everything thoroughly that allowed us students to see what mental health nursing is like!



**Creation of Mental Health nursing video:
Nurses from HSC, Lifescape, Lewis & Clark,
and Avera Behavior Health**

<https://vimeo.com/1167784904/8d8418b89e?share=copy&fl=sv&fe=ci>

Action Team III

Overall goal: Address and develop innovative strategies to solve issues with preceptor supply



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What would incentivize a nurse to be a preceptor?



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What Preceptors want- Incentives to be a Preceptor..



#1) Monetary (extra pay)

#2) Misc. benefits (shifts, hosp apparel, coffee shop credit)

#3) **RECOGNITION!!**

**Many said they don't need an incentive- they just enjoy doing it and know the importance of it



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All nominees recognized!

*Grant Project Director sent an email to all nominees, their supervisor/s, and the student who nominated the preceptor, to share what the nomination said, and thank them!

Feedback from Nominees and Supervisors!



Thank you so much for sharing! This means so much! Emma was such a pleasure to have as a student! -Kiara M (Preceptor)

Thank you so much for including us to this nomination and highlighting Kiara's work as a preceptor! I'm so happy to hear that Emma had such a wonderful experience at the Castle and that Kiara offered her opportunities to learn and grow in her nursing role. It is so important to us that the students feel supported and welcomed and it sounds like Emma was able to witness the culture we try to cultivate here in our unit.

Kiara – thank you for being such a wonderful mentor and teacher for Emma and providing such an impactful experience! It's a true testament to your calling as a nurse and who you are as a human. 😊 Way to go!

Erin Thurlow, BSN, RN, CCRN

Director of Peds, PICU, Peds Outpatient & Child Life



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Preceptor of the Semester Award SPRING 2025

Annie Christiansen
Milbank Area Hospital- Avera



Preceptor of the Semester Award FA25 Stephanie Reinhardt- Freeman

Steph was an excellent preceptor. She goes above and beyond to make sure each of her patient's needs are met. She always had a great attitude and took time to build relationships with patients and other staff members. She encourages her students to try new skills and gives good constructive criticism without being condescending. She is extremely knowledgeable in nursing and had an in depth answer for all of my questions. If we had downtime Steph took time to teach me about different equipment in the ER, different heart rhythms and telemetry changes, and other useful skills.

Hot off the Press!!

Spring, 2026 Preceptor of the
Semester...




Mary Jones

Unity Point Health- St. Lukes, Sioux
City IA.



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A simple, yet powerful gesture..



Thank you,
always say thank you;
it's the greatest gift
you can give someone.
Maya Angelou



Thank
You!

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Action Team IV

Develop good quality jobs and review current practices, policies and environments to ensure employment standards for nursing”

*Annual Nursing Summit in S.F.





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We are excited to continue this work and look forward to collaborating with our partners across the state!