

Winter 2009

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**Cheryl P. McCahon****Patricia E. Benner, RN, PhD, FAAN**

Presents:

"Teaching, Learning and Supporting a Complex Practice of Care"

Friday, May 1, 2009

7:00 a.m. to 12 noon

[Register Now!](#)**Partners Investing in  
Nursing's Future***Explore a Career in Nursing Education*Lanie Maslinski, BSN, MBA, RN  
Project Manager RWJF PIN Project  
The Center for Health AffairsJohn Clochesy, PhD, RN, FAAN, FCCM  
Associate Professor  
Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing

Nurses are the largest component of the health care workforce and their knowledge and vigilance is critical in keeping patients safe and healthy. The stability and the quality of our systems rely on a sufficient supply of appropriately educated and skilled nurses, but our nation is threatened with an increasing shortage of educated new nurses. One reason for this is the lack of nursing faculty available to teach nursing students.

The North East Ohio Nursing Faculty Corps project is being led by The Mt. Sinai Health Care Foundation; the Northeast Ohio Nursing Initiative (NEONI); the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing; the Mt. Sinai Skills & Simulation Center; and the M.E. & F.J. Callahan Foundation.

The project is currently utilizing a two-year grant from the

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) to create a pathway for registered nurses throughout the northeast Ohio region to consider and pursue a companion or supplemental career in nursing education.

The project offers mentoring opportunities for interested nurses so they can acquire a better understanding of the different roles of nurse educators. The North East Ohio Nurse Faculty Corps offers day-long workshops on various aspects of nurse education and technologies used in teaching. Topics include Civility, Clinical Instruction in Nursing, Diversity Among Learners and Learning Styles, Exam Preparation and Item Writing, Integrating Quality and Safety Education for Nurses, Providing Feedback, Supporting Transition from Student to Practicing Nurse,

and Using Simulation in Nursing Education.

If you are interested in 2009 workshops or any of the project resources, visit "Partners Investing in Nursing" (PIN Program) online at [www.NEONI.org](http://www.NEONI.org).

The North East Ohio Nurse Faculty Corps is a compliment to the excellent work being accomplished by the Deans' Roundtable Faculty Initiative. This project builds on the work done by NEONI and the Deans' Roundtable to increase the number and skill of nurse educators in northeast Ohio so we can meet the nursing workforce demands in the region.

For more information contact Lanie Maslinski at The Center for Health Affairs, 216.255.3663 or [lainie.maslinski@chanet.org](mailto:lainie.maslinski@chanet.org)

**Participating  
Organizations:**

- Bryant & Stratton College
- Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing at Case
- Center for Health Affairs
- Cleveland State University
- Cuyahoga Community College
- Hiram College
- Huron School of Nursing
- Lakeland Community College
- Lorain County Community College
- Kent State University
- Marymount School of Nursing
- Notre Dame College
- Ohio League for Nursing
- University of Akron
- Ursuline College

## Faculty Corner; Educator Tip

### Promoting Critical Thinking: Integrating the Use of Concept Maps

**Kimberly Dillon MSN, RN**

Lecturer

Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing  
Case Western Reserve University

How do we promote critical thinking among nursing students? Better yet, how do we objectively evaluate it once we observe it? That is a question nurse educators struggle with frequently. After reading repetitive care plans that simply mirror the nursing diagnosis book, how do we know the student truly comprehends the concepts involved in the patient's care? We all know the holistic care nurses provide requires far more than attainment of book knowledge. It requires application of the knowledge gained to make vital decisions. These vital decisions direct the care patients receive.

Essentially, critical thinking requires the synthesis of attained book knowledge into appropriate action to ensure the best care possible is delivered to each individual patient. The question still remains: how do we motivate students to put their gained knowledge into appropriate action? How do we encourage them to demonstrate their independent decision making abilities? How do we evaluate their understanding?

Although seasoned clinical instructors can frequently

see the connections being made in the students mind, I needed something more objective to evaluate the students' critical thinking ability. Upon taking over the Acute Care and Critical Care courses required for the junior year, I noticed the previous instructor had begun to integrate concept mapping as an alternative to traditional care plans.

Concept maps come in many different forms; however the premise behind them is similar. The concept mapping method requires the student to take concepts central to patient care, such as pharmacological management of the acutely ill patient, and forces the student to develop the concept in relation to the individual patient. Each concept is then interlinked with other concepts central to the patient's care. By examining the individual concepts, along with the interlinking of concepts, the patient's needs are identified. These needs are prioritized and then nursing diagnoses, outcomes, and interventions are developed.

The concept maps require the student to assess multiple essential concepts in

order to make decisions regarding patient care. Through this process the student is able to create a holistic plan of care for each individual patient. Although this may sound similar to a care plan, the identification of concepts and the relationships between the concepts force the student to apply his or her book knowledge and make decisions that direct the patient's plan of care. The concept map also promotes the student's creativity and independent thinking style, as there is no one set format to be used. It is up to the student to identify the important concepts for the individual patient, lay them out visually, and construct the links.

To date, I have not found a single source, such as the books available for care plans, that standardizes all of these links for the student. Instead, this method requires them to utilize multiple resources, including evidence based journals, to design the patient's plan of care.

The students' reaction to the change in thought process from the traditional care plan to the concept map is interesting. Initially

there is a fair amount of resistance to the change in thought process; however, as the semester progresses the students' response changes. The students consistently comment on how much they are learning and how the process helped them better prepare to care for their patients.

As with any new process, adjustments and modifications continue to be made to the concept mapping process through both student and clinical instructor evaluation. Just as with patient care, interventions for teaching nursing students need to be individualized in order to meet the various student learning styles. Although it may not be the right fit for every program, the concept mapping process has made a positive impact in the critical thinking development of the Frances Payne Bolton BSN students.

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#### Online Resources for Instructors

Texas Collaborative for Teaching Excellence [http://cord.org/txcollabnursing/onsite\\_conceptmap.htm](http://cord.org/txcollabnursing/onsite_conceptmap.htm)

McHugh Schuster, Pamela. *Concept Mapping: A Critical-Thinking Approach to Care Planning*. Philadelphia, PA.: F.A. Davis Company, 2002. <http://www.scribd.com/doc/10060455/Concept-Mapping>

## Remembering Cheryl McCahon, PhD, RN Friend, Leader, Mentor, and Teacher November 20, 1943 - August 3, 2008



The profession of nursing, especially the nursing community of northeast Ohio, lost an integral member, friend, and colleague on August 3, 2008. On that day the human life of Cheryl P. McCahon ended, but her legacy will live on through the students she taught, the nurses she mentored, and the initiatives she began and nurtured. She touched so many, and all those she touched will miss her greatly.

Cheryl McCahon grew up in Toledo and received her diploma in nursing from St. Vincent's Hospital School of Nursing there in 1963. She went on to earn a BSN at the University of Pittsburgh, an MSN in Gerontological Nursing Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing at Case, and her PhD at Kent State University.

Before focusing her energies in nursing education, Cheryl held a number of clinical positions in Ohio. She worked at St. Vincent's

Hospital in Toledo, Geauga Community Hospital in Chardon, Gates Mills Manor in Mayfield Heights, and Mt. Carmel Hospital in Columbus. At one time she even worked as a camp nurse in New Hampshire.

Her first role as a nursing instructor was at Presbyterian University Hospital SON in Pittsburg and later in the Continuing Education Department at Presbyterian University Hospital. She was a Medical-Surgical instructor at Cleveland Metropolitan General Hospital SON, as well as at Lakeland and Cuyahoga Community Colleges. For three years she was a faculty member in Gerontological Nursing at Frances Payne Bolton before she came to Cleveland State University in 1983 where, in addition to teaching, she coordinated the basic BSN program during a time of tremendous growth.

During her tenure at Cleveland State University, Dr. McCahon filled many roles. Those roles included serving on numerous committees and being the liaison for a number of collaborative programs including: the CSU/VNA Vision on 22<sup>nd</sup> Street Partnership, the School Nurse Licensure Program, and the New Initiatives with Cleveland Clinic. She was also Director of the Gerontological Studies Program, Under-

graduate Nursing Program Director for almost a decade, and twice served as Interim Director of the School of Nursing.

During her career she was published more than 70 times and developed numerous presentations on a variety of nursing topics in education and gerontology. Dr. McCahon was also active on many professional and community boards and with many organizations, often holding leadership positions. Among the many these included: the Nursing Education Mobility and Access Group (NEMAG), Northeast Ohio Nursing Initiative (NEONI), Greater Cleveland Nurses Association, Ohio Council of Deans and Directors, Sigma Theta Tau International (STTI), Alzheimer's Association, American Cancer Society, Ohio League for Nursing, Nursing Education Administration Association, and Ohio Gerontological Society.

During the last two years, Cheryl also played an integral part in the Deans' Roundtable Faculty Initiative, a regional program initiated by Cleveland Clinic to increase the number of clinical nurse faculty in our community. She brought her love of education, positive attitude, and spirit of dedication to the task of bringing nursing education

and nursing practice together to address the current faculty shortage.

In 2005, she was presented with the CSU *Distinguished Faculty Award for Service* to recognize her many contributions. That same year, she was recognized with the *Memorable Educator Award for Excellence in Ohio* and was featured in *Ohio Magazine*. In May of 2008, Cheryl was honored with NEONI's *Lifetime Achievement Award*. This award is given to an individual whose strong commitment to nursing throughout their career and service to others has made a significant contribution to the overall advancement of the nursing profession.

Her dedication to nursing education and practice was exemplary. The full extent of her legacy will never be known, but its effects are clearly evident in the impact she had on students, nurses, colleagues, the School of Nursing, Cleveland State University, and the community.

