

# 26<sup>th</sup> WORLD NURSING EDUCATION CONFERENCE

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## Nursing leadership: developing master's prepared transformational leaders through distance education technology and on-site coaching

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**Program Aim:** The MSN Executive Nurse Leader program at the author's institution prepares 21st century nurse leaders to influence and advance health locally, nationally and globally. Executive Nurse Leader (ENL) graduates are positioned to lead change and advance health through collaboration, innovation and dissemination of new approaches to healthcare that improves individual and population health. The ENL program is based on research delineating the key competencies of successful, transformational leaders.

**Program Methodology:** Leadership competencies are integrated into didactic content delivered through an asynchronous on-line platform augmented with synchronous learning opportunities and opportunity for reflection. Didactic content is paired with a 3 semester leadership practicum where the student is mentored while leading a major change project. During each practicum semester, faculty conduct on-site visits with the student and the mentor to assess leadership development, provide coaching and identify leadership opportunities for the student. These are intensive visits and often last 2-3 hours. Technology is also used for site visits, and the faculty visit may be in person or via iPad/Face Time™. The combination of distance education and on-site practicums increases the capacity of a leadership development program to reach more students and develop them as leaders.

**Findings:** Consistently high student satisfaction ratings for program content and implementation and enhanced sense of self-efficacy as a leader were observed.

**Conclusions & Implications:** Transformational leaders are a critical component of developing and nurturing healthcare knowledge workers in a rapidly changing healthcare environment. Assuring a sufficient and competent leadership workforce is possible through combining distance education with intensive practicum and coaching experiences. This model is scalable and replicable and will help to ensure that nursing leaders are positioned to influence and lead.

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