

**Nursing Career Ladder:
Accelerated Licensed Practical Nurse Training Program (LPN)
A Program of the Health and Hospitals Corporation (HHC) and the Department of
Education (DOE)**

PROGRAM REVIEW SUMMARY

This overview of the Nursing Career Ladder: Accelerated Licensed Practical Nurse Training Program (LPN) is based on a program review conducted by Westat/Metis staff for the evaluation of the Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO) initiatives. The data were collected between June and July 2008 through interviews conducted by Westat and Metis staff with staff of the CEO, the director and staff at the Health and Hospitals Corporation (HHC) and the New York City (NYC) Department of Education (DOE), and the director and faculty of the CEO LPN program and a review of program documents and monthly data reports and management reports to CEO from HHC and DOE through May 2008.

Sponsoring Agencies: Health and Hospital Corporation and New York City Department of Education

Provider Agencies: HHC and DOE

Start Date: Recruitment and preparation began in February 2007, and classes began in September 2007.

CEO Budget: Approximately \$1 million annually

Target Population: The program is intended annually to serve 40 students (30 poor and low-income New Yorkers and 10 HHC workers) who aspire to become Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs). The program began in 2007-2008, and will serve a total of 160 students by 2011. Six HHC workers met the admission criteria for the 2008-2009 program, and 34 poor and low-income New Yorkers will be admitted to the program in 2008.

Statement of Need: Limited seats available in nursing programs fail to produce enough qualified nurses to meet the demand for nurses. Current nursing programs are academically competitive, and income is not a major factor for admissions.¹

Goal and Services: The goal of the program is to help low-income individuals obtain LPN certification in a field that is projected to offer good wages and future growth. Up to 40 participating students receive a total of 1,152 hours of instruction during an 11-month period. The program includes a mix of classroom instruction and clinical rotations at the Coler-Goldwater Specialty Hospital and Nursing Facility.

Eligibility Criteria: Eligibility for the 30 poor and low-income students is based on Federal poverty guidelines (i.e., below 130% of the Federal poverty levels). The participating HHC workers need not meet the income eligibility requirements. All students (including the HHC employees) must be legally authorized to work in the United States, reside in NYC, have a reading level of at least 11.0 (grade equivalent) and a math level of at least 10.5 on the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), and achieve at the 40th percentile or above on the Center for Nursing Education Test (CNET). Participants must satisfy criminal background checks and drug screening requirements before they are issued a license. The current cohort of students meets these requirements.

¹ Center for Economic Opportunity (December 2007), *Strategy and Implementation Report*. New York: Center for Economic Opportunity, p. 71.

Targets/Outcomes: The program’s key targets are for (1) all enrolled students to graduate and become certified LPNs, (2) the students to fulfill a 22-month work commitment to HHC, and (3) a second cohort of 40 to begin the program by September 2008. Target and actual numbers are presented in Table 1, as well as the percentage of each target obtained as of June 2008. Other long-term targets for this program include reducing the use of overtime and agency staff at HHC hospitals, improving the career ladder within the health industry, and developing a scalable model to address the significant nursing shortage in the City, HHC hospitals, and the country.

Table 1. LPN’s Target Numbers, Actual Numbers, and Percent of Target Met

Category	Target Numbers	Actual Numbers	Percent of Target Met
Number of students who enrolled in the program	40	39 ^a	98%
Number of enrolled students who graduated from the program	39 (all enrolled students are expected to graduate)	39	100%
Number of students who pass the New York State Board exam and obtain certification	39 (all students who graduate are expected to pass the New York State Board exam and obtain certification)	Not available until fall 2008	Not available until fall 2008
Number of students who are placed in employment as LPNs:^b At Goldwater Hospital At Gouverneur Long Term Care Facility Waiting for placement at other facilities	30 ^c	19 5 5	96%
Number of students who enrolled in prep program	60	60	100%
Number of students who successfully completed the prep program	6 out of 60 students ^d	15	250%

^aOne student enrolled but was unable to start the program.

^bOne student will not be hired due to immigration issues.

^cThe nine HHC students go back to their previous positions and will be promoted to LPN positions after they pass the Board exam.

^dThe HHC director indicated that the expectation was that at least 10 percent of the 60 students would successfully complete the prep program and be enrolled in the CEO LPN program. Having 15 students successfully complete the prep program was a very big achievement for the program.

Selected Key Findings

Fidelity to the Program Model. Interviews with the HHC director and staff, DOE staff, LPN administrators, teachers, and counselor at the CEO LPN program indicate that the program has been implemented with fidelity to the model. The program has recruited and serves the intended target population.

Characteristics of the Clients Served in Comparison to the Target Population. As reported by HHC, 27 of the 30 CEO-sponsored students were at or below 130 percent of the Federal poverty level when they applied to the LPN program. Three students earned approximately \$2,000 more than the 130 percent of poverty.² All 39 students met all other selection criteria.³

² This small amount over-income is not sufficient to make the students ineligible and is not considered a problem.

³ One student who was recruited to the first cohort had not met the immigration requirements but had been admitted because the recruitment period was very short and time was insufficient to completely screen that applicant prior to admission.

Thirty of the 39 students are female. Five students are ages 21 to 24; 30 are ages 25 to 44; and four students are ages 45 to 64. Twenty-two non-HHC students are Black, four are Asian, three are Hispanic, and one is White. Six non-HHC students have a bachelor's degree, three have an associate's degree, 16 have some college, four have a GED, and one has a high school diploma. The race/ethnicity and education background of the nine HHC students is not known. Six of the 39 students live in the borough of Manhattan; nine live in the Bronx; and 12 each live in Brooklyn and Queens.

Service Delivery. The CEO LPN program is different from most traditional LPN training programs because this CEO initiative takes place in a hospital setting. LPN programs usually are based in community colleges or private schools. The students at the CEO LPN program have access to the hospital staff members and are able to interact with them. Additionally, this is an accelerated program (an 11-month program as opposed to a 2-year traditional program). The students receive 242 hours of clinical exposure. Although this program shares the same syllabus as the other two DOE-sponsored LPN programs, the quality of the clinical program differentiates this program from similar training programs because students are able to interact with hospital staff at the Coler-Goldwater hospital and learn from them. A unique feature of the CEO LPN program is that all instructors are Registered Nurses (RNs).

This year (2008) CEO funds helped DOE create an organized evening preparatory program that took place between January and May 2008 in Manhattan and Goldwater for new students who plan to join the LPN program in September 2008. Before this prep program, DOE had conducted a modified version of the current prep program for HHC employees. However, the earlier prep program had not yielded good results. There was a need among students who had passed the CNET but fell short on the TABE to raise their TABE scores in order to be eligible to apply to the LPN program (these participants had to score at least 10.0 instead of 11.0 on TABE reading and 9.5 instead of 10.5 on TABE math). The teachers for this prep program included two staff members from the CEO LPN program, the supervisor of the LPN program, and another teacher from the Manhattan program. The sessions focused on math, reading/language, and employability/responsible behaviors. CEO funding helped meet this need with the prep program.

Provider Capacity. The administrator responsible for the LPN program on a day-to-day basis is the director of nursing, who is assisted by a lead teacher, three other teachers, a staff member in charge of the labs, and a counselor. The staff members feel that they need a social worker working at least part-time with the program because they feel they are not well equipped to help some of the students who experience multiple problems. The director and all the instructors are experienced RNs. The teachers are enthusiastic about the program and are willing to step in for each other if someone is out rather than use substitute staff. It appears as though the program has the capacity to provide the basic supports, facilities, and services the students need. The nursing director and faculty are particularly impressive in their dedication to the program's goals and to the students. Faculty members seem to know the issues students face and they try to provide them with personal attention.

Agency Management. HHC and the Office of Adult and Continuing Education closely monitor the LPN program. The program sends attendance records of the students to HHC. The LPN director has a very hands-on style of management and reviews progress almost daily, fine-tuning the program to address problems and improve the likelihood of meeting program goals. She works closely with HHC staff members who provide the necessary support for the students.

Early Outcomes. The target enrollment was 40 students. Forty students were recruited and 39 enrolled. None of the 39 enrolled students dropped out and all of them graduated on time in June 2008 (100%). These students will sit for the state board exam this fall to obtain their license to practice as LPNs. The HHC students go back to their previous positions until they pass the board exam, at which time their positions will be upgraded to match their qualifications. The 30 non-HHC students had to apply to different HHC facilities – long-term care facilities – to begin work after graduation because only long-term care facilities allow students who have graduated from the LPN program to work as LPNs before they sit for the Board exam to obtain the LPN certification. Of the 30 non-HHC students in the CEO LPN program, the Coler-Goldwater hospital plans to hire 19 of the LPN students. Gouverneur Healthcare Services has hired five students, while five other students are waiting to be placed at other HHC facilities. HHC could not place one student because of his immigration status.

Additionally, by May 2008, 15 of the students who participated in the new prep program had already passed the CNET exam and obtained qualifying reading and math scores on the TABE, making them eligible for acceptance into the September 2008 LPN class. The expectation was that approximately six students who participated in the prep program would meet the eligibility requirements for the CEO LPN program, so the actual number (15) substantially exceeded the target, an important achievement for the program.

Conclusions and Recommendations

As implemented, the LPN program appears to be in alignment with the CEO mission and key CEO eligibility criteria. Data so far indicate that the program is on track to achieving its target goals—all 39 participants graduated, and data from the administration of the state board licensing exams will be available in the fall to determine how many of these graduates will qualify for their LPN licenses.

The Westat/Metis team notes that the program needs at least a part-time social worker. Although the staff members are able to help and direct students to where they can get services, a social worker would be able to deal better with some of the issues the students face. The Westat/Metis team also recommends HHC considering revising the screening process of applicants. HHC screens the applicants to determine their income eligibility (whether they meet the income eligibility criteria) as well as the applicants ability to legally work in the United States before they are admitted to the CEO LPN program. We recommend that HHC review the current screening process to make it more rigorous so that the applicants admitted to the CEO LPN program meet all the eligibility criteria.

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PROGRAM REVIEW REPORT

1. Introduction

The Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO) has funded approximately 40 initiatives across some 20 sponsoring agencies aimed at reducing the number of working poor, young adults, and children living in poverty in New York City. CEO is committed to evaluating its programs and policies and is developing a specific evaluation plan for each of its initiatives. For example, several major new initiatives will implement random assignment evaluations or other rigorous designs. Some programs are slated to receive implementation and outcome evaluations, while others may be evaluated using readily available administrative data. This differentiated approach reflects the varied scale of the CEO interventions, data and evaluation opportunities, and finite program and evaluation resources. Westat and Metis Associates are evaluating many of these programs on behalf of CEO. The purposes of the evaluations are to collect and report data on the implementation, progress, and outcomes of the programs in the CEO initiative to inform policy and program decision-making within CEO and the agencies that sponsor the programs.

The first phase of the Westat/Metis evaluation is to conduct a systematic review of selected CEO programs. The program reviews involve Westat/Metis staff reviewing program documents, obtaining available implementation and outcome data, interviewing program administrators, and, where appropriate, going on-site to observe program activities and interview direct service staff and participants. The results are used to assess the program design and implementation, develop a logic model to represent the underlying theory of each program, determine the extent to which the program meets key CEO criteria, examine the measurement and information systems for the program, and provide options for next steps.

Information and data for this Program Review Report are based on interviews conducted by Westat/Metis staff during June and July 2008 with staff of the CEO, the director and key staff at HHC and DOE, and the director and teachers at the CEO LPN program, as well as a review of program documents and monthly data and management reports from HHC and DOE through May 2008.

This Program Review Report provides an overview and assessment of the program on several dimensions, including its goals, fidelity to the program model, target population and clients served thus far, program services, and agency management. CEO and the relevant sponsoring agency were invited to identify specific questions of interest to be included as part of these standardized program reviews.

A key analytic tool used in the program review is the development of a logic model that serves as a visual representation of the underlying logic or theory of a program. The program logic model details the program's context, assumptions, and resources and their relationships to one another. By examining the program's internal logic and external context, the evaluation team and reader are able to determine if the program design is consistent with overall goals and capable of achieving its

intended outcomes. Toward this end, this Program Review Report focuses on early outcomes and the challenges faced in achieving them.

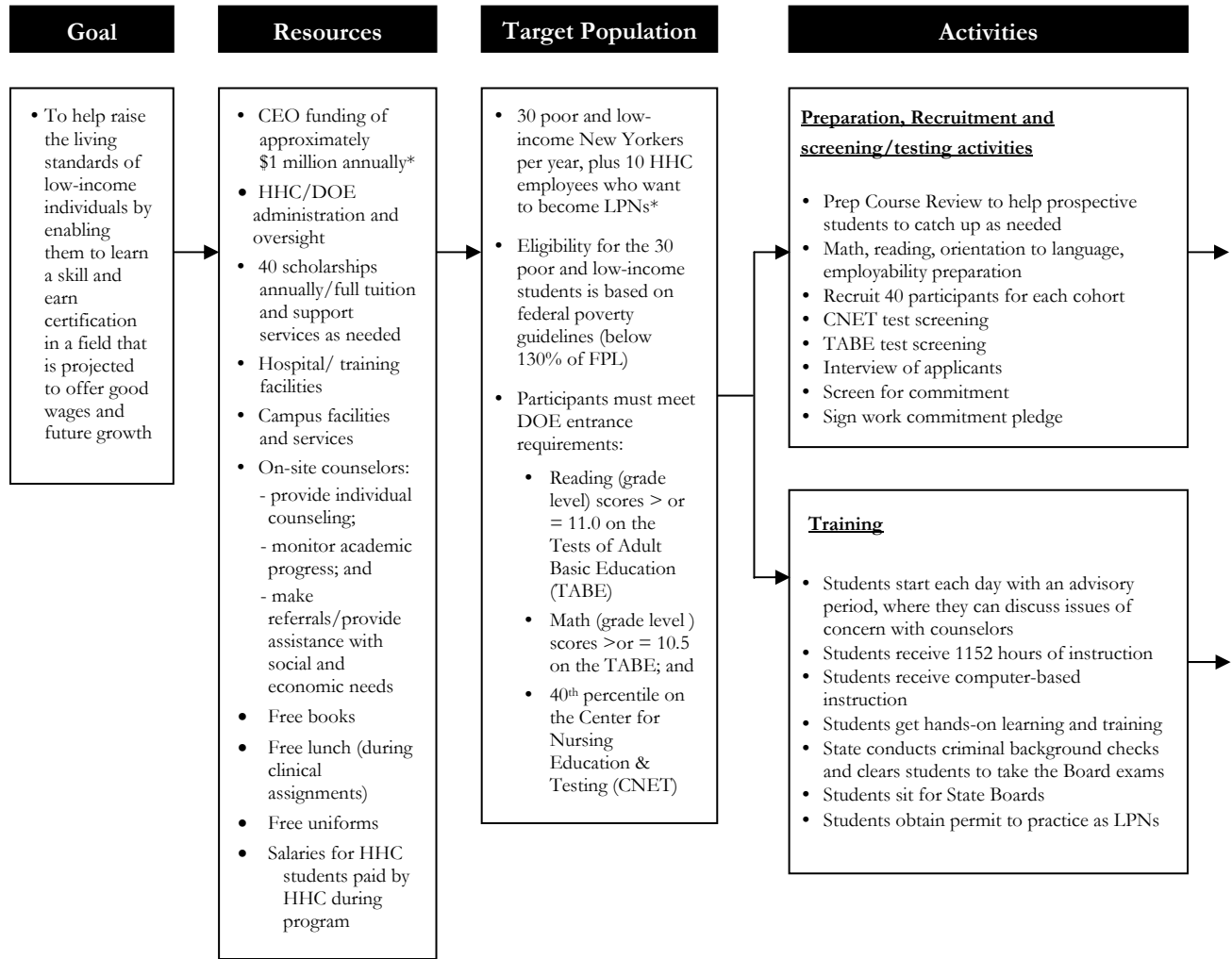
2. Overview and Assessment of the Program

Program Goal. The CEO-sponsored LPN program at the Coler-Goldwater Specialty Hospital and Nursing Facility located on Roosevelt Island, New York, is a collaboration between the Health and Hospitals Corporation (HHC) and the New York City (NYC) Department of Education (DOE). There were already two existing DOE LPN programs in Brooklyn and Manhattan, which each recruit approximately 60 students annually, and the CEO-sponsored HHC/DOE LPN program recruits about 40 students annually. Recruitment and preparation for the CEO program began in February 2007 and classes began in September 2007. The State Education Department Office of Post Secondary Programs and Office of Professions have approved the curriculum for this program, and DOE is responsible for implementing it.

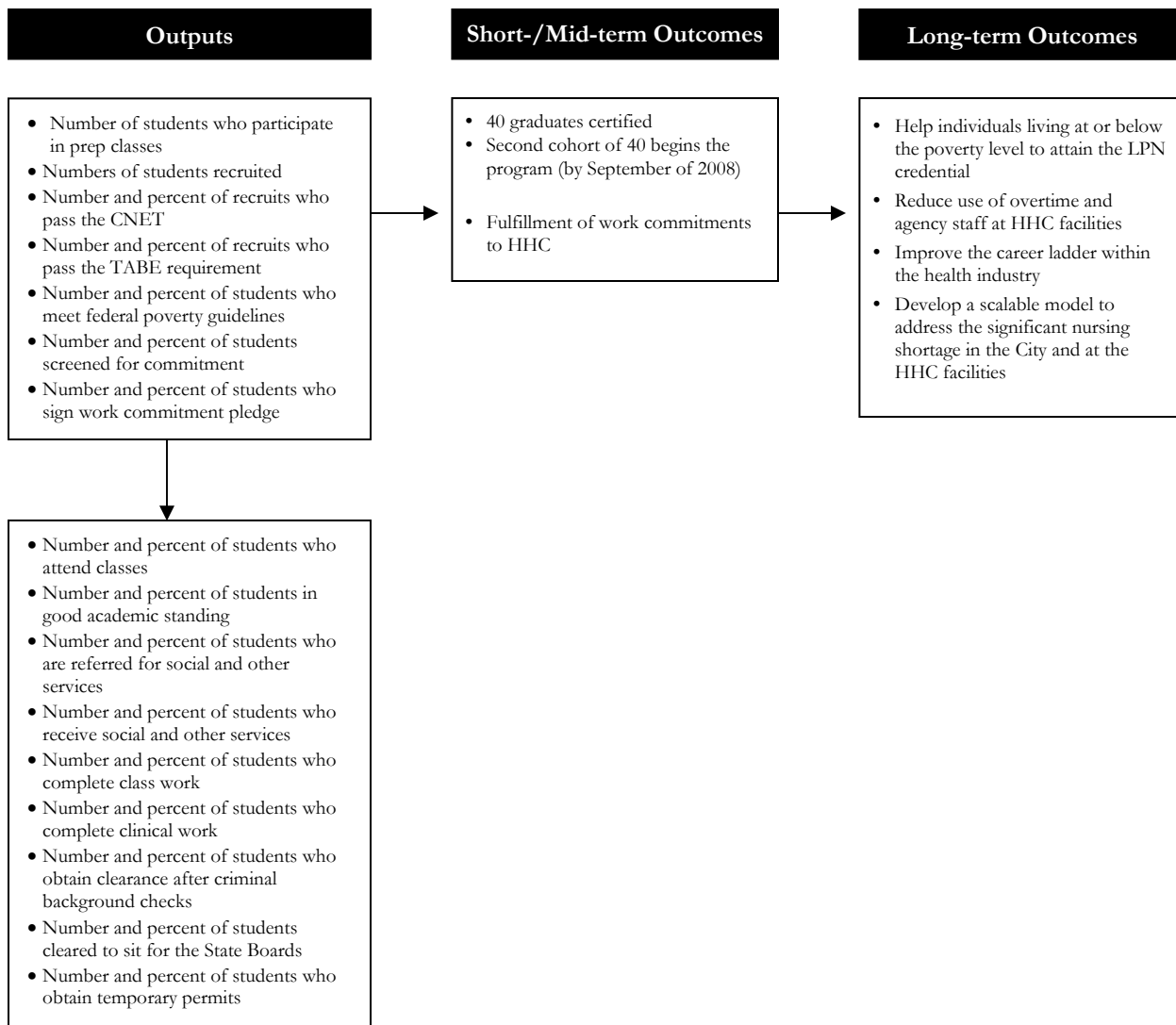
The goal of the CEO LPN program is to raise the living standards of low-income individuals by providing them with training and support to become licensed practical nurses (LPNs) – a career that is projected to offer good wages and future growth. With the LPN credential, individuals can earn a starting HHC salary of approximately \$40,000 per year. Additionally, this program is intended to help reduce the use of overtime and agency staff at HHC facilities, as well as improve the career ladder within the health industry.

The key elements of the CEO-sponsored HHC/DOE LPN program are displayed in a logic model—or theory of action—format on the following two pages. The logic model includes the program’s context, assumptions, and resources. Each activity is linked to the number of individuals targeted to participate in the different activities (outputs), as well as short- and long-term participant outcomes.

**Nursing Career Ladder:
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Logic Model**



*CEO funding pays the tuition for all 40 students. The 10 HHC students continue to receive their HHC salaries while enrolled in the program and have to report to work when school is not in session.



Context

- Approximately 350,000 individuals in New York City are working, yet not earning enough to rise above poverty.¹
- Low-income students are less likely to complete a post-secondary education, placing them at greater risk of continued poverty.²
- Nurses are in short supply and it is expected to get worse—this results in too much nurse overtime, which negatively affects quality of care.³
- In part, this initiative constitutes an extension of an ongoing career ladder program at HHC.

¹ Strategy and Implementation Report. NYC Center for Economic Opportunity. 2007 and U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 American Community Survey.

² Strategy and Implementation Report. NYC Center for Economic Opportunity. 2007

³ The Nursing shortage. George Williams. <http://www.nasrecruitment.com/MicroSites/healthcare/Articles/featureH5a.html>

Fidelity to the Program Model. Interviews with the HHC director and staff, DOE staff, LPN administrators, teachers, and counselor indicate that the program is consistent with its model. The program receives approximately \$1 million in funding from CEO each year beginning in 2007 and can accommodate up to 40 students (30 students who meet income eligibility requirements and 10 HHC employees who do not have to meet the income eligibility requirements). During the first year (2007-2008), 40 students were recruited (10 HHC employees and 30 non-HHC students). HHC employees must be in “good standing” (i.e., have no history of labor relations issues and received a "satisfactory or better" evaluation) in order to receive approval from his/her facility to participate in the program. However, one of the HHC employees accepted to the program was unable to attend because he/she was not in good standing and therefore did not receive facility approval. The program was unable to recruit a substitute student within the time frame. As a result the program served 39 students rather than 40 in its first year.

The CEO-sponsored LPN program occupies a separate wing of Goldwater Specialty Hospital and Nursing Facility on Roosevelt Island. The space provides several classrooms; a computer lab; a teacher’s lounge; a room with hospital beds, medical equipment, and human patient simulators (i.e., dummies); a multi-purpose room; and administrative offices. Each student has access to computers with high-speed internet. All students receive free tuition (paid for by CEO). Other available resources include free books, free lunch during clinical rotations, and free uniforms. In addition, the nine HHC students continue to receive their full HHC salaries while enrolled in the program. HHC employees are categorized as being on “educational leave” while school is in session. They are required to report back to their facility at the end of each week to sign their timesheet. Employees are mandated to report back to work during school holidays (e.g., Christmas and Easter) and are also required to utilize “sick time” should they miss a day of class due to illness.

Students have the option of receiving services from an onsite counselor. Faculty members noted that the program could benefit from the services of at least a part-time social worker because the counselor (who is a teacher in the program and not an RN or a social worker) and the faculty are not able to address all of the issues faced by students in the program.

Teachers monitor the academic progress of the students by paying close attention to their grades and how they complete assignments. Students have been divided alphabetically into four groups of nine or 10 students during the 2007-2008 program year because the maximum group size is 10 for clinical rotations. Students take classes and participate in clinical assignments in these smaller groups. Teachers receive professional development depending on the area in which they want to focus, such as use of new technology.

The CEO LPN program differs from most traditional LPN training programs in that it takes place in a hospital setting, while most LPN programs are based in community colleges or private schools. The students in the CEO LPN program have access to the hospital staff members and are able to interact with them. The CEO LPN program, as well as the other two DOE LPN programs in NYC, are accelerated programs (11-month programs as opposed to the 2-year traditional program provided elsewhere). Although the CEO LPN program shares the same syllabus as the other two DOE LPN programs, the quality of the clinical program differentiates this program from similar training programs. A unique feature of the CEO-sponsored LPN program is that all instructors are Registered Nurses (RNs), unlike other LPN programs. The range of clinical experiences that present themselves daily at an active specialty hospital such as Coler-Goldwater offers a huge advantage to

the students. Moreover, staff members work very closely with the students to help them address any issues that arise.

All 39 students in the CEO LPN program graduated in June 2008 and will sit for the New York State Board exam to obtain their LPN license during fall 2008. During the summer, all graduates participated in workshops to prepare for the New York State licensing exam. The first group of students is going to sit for the board exam in September 2008. The HHC students go back to their previous positions until they pass the board exam at which time their positions will be upgraded to match their qualifications. The 30 non-HHC students had to apply to different HHC facilities – long-term care facilities – to begin work after graduation because long-term care facilities allow students who have graduated from the LPN program to work as LPNs on a permit before they sit for the Board exam to obtain the LPN certification.¹ Program administrators indicate that all applicants will be hired by HHC. These graduates are expected to receive a starting salary of \$40,305.

Beginning this year (2008), CEO funds helped DOE create an organized preparatory program from January through May for new students who plan to join the LPN program in September 2008. Before this prep program, DOE had conducted a modified version of the current prep program for HHC employees. However, the earlier prep program had not yielded good results. There was a need among students who had passed the CNET but fell short on the TABE to raise their TABE scores in order to be eligible to apply to the LPN program (these participants had to score at least 10.0 instead of 11.0 on TABE reading and 9.5 instead of 10.5 on TABE math). CEO funding helped meet this need with the prep program. It was reported by the Director of Operations for Adult Education at the NYC DOE that this is the first time that DOE has had a well-organized prep program. This prep program was opened to the public. The students were all referred by HHC and they would all have been slotted to go to the CEO LPN program if they met the eligibility requirements.

The HHC director noted that they conducted a verbal preliminary screening of the students' financial status to see if they fall within the income eligibility criteria set for the LPN program (i.e., at or below 130% of the Federal poverty level). However, they did not examine documentation from these students to evaluate their financial status. The Director of Operations for Adult Education at the NYC DOE noted that some students took jobs with HHC after the prep program and are attending the other LPN programs.

The prep program began in the evening after the class day ended for the LPN program. The teachers for this prep program included two staff members from the CEO LPN program, the supervisor of the CEO LPN program, and another teacher from the DOE Manhattan program. Students who fell short on the TABE who wanted to be part of the CEO LPN program were able to participate in the prep program (these participants had to score at least 10.0 instead of 11.0 on TABE reading and 9.5 instead of 10.5 on TABE math). There were 42 prep sessions. The sessions focused on math, reading/language, and employability/responsible behaviors.

Sixty seats are available for the prep program and 60 participants who applied were initially accepted. However, when some of the applicants learned of the work and time involved, they were not prepared to take part and dropped out of the prep program. The spaces that were open as a

¹ All students certified as LPNs are expected to work for HHC or to repay the costs of the program.

result of students dropping out were given to other candidates who had passed the CNET but needed to raise their TABE scores in order to be accepted into the CEO LPN program and had not originally applied to the prep program. The Director of Operations for Adult Education at the NYC DOE noted that this was an unforeseen and somewhat unanticipated outcome that was very much appreciated by those who would have otherwise not been able to access the program.

Target Population and Clients Served. The program is intended to serve 30 poor and low-income New Yorkers per year, plus 10 HHC workers (regardless of income) who want to become LPNs. Although the HHC employees do not have the income requirement, there is a focus on this being a “career ladder” program and the HHC employees recruited to the program are lower-level staff who would benefit from the program. Eligibility for the 30 poor and low-income students is based on Federal poverty guidelines (i.e., those whose incomes are at or below 130% of the Federal poverty levels). The HHC workers are not required to meet the income eligibility requirements. In addition to the financial requirements, in order to be eligible for the program, all students (including the HHC employees) must be legally authorized to work in the United States, reside in NYC, obtain a reading level of at least 11.0 (grade equivalent) and a math level of at least 10.5 on the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), and achieve at the 40th percentile or above on the Center for Nursing Education Test (CNET). Participants must pass criminal background checks and drug screens.² In addition to meeting all the eligibility criteria, the HHC employees who apply for the LPN program are required to provide a validation of good standing from their supervisors at HHC.

According to the HHC director and the CEO LPN program director, almost all the current students (which is the first cohort) meet the eligibility requirements except for three students who had incomes of approximately \$2,000 above 130 percent of poverty.³ The HHC director noted that during the financial screening process, the “over income” of these three students was not realized and that this was an oversight. The 30 CEO-sponsored students are required to fill out an application for a scholarship. They have to report the number of dependents in the family and provide basic demographic information. In addition, they have to provide a copy of their latest W-2 form and, if employed, the current pay stub for income verification.⁴ Participating HHC employees remain on the HHC payroll while they are in the program. This clearly distinguished the HHC students from the 30 poor and low-income non-HHC students. Generally speaking, the HHC students did not face as many economic challenges or external pressures as did the non-HHC students, mainly due to the latter’s low-income status (their problems included dealing with Section 8 housing, evictions, etc.).

Outreach and Recruitment. Recruitment for the first cohort was completed in August 2007. The director of the LPN program indicated that it is strategically better to spread the recruitment process out over time to observe whether candidates display persistence and will continue to participate. There is a natural pool of applicants through the DOE (i.e., students who take the CNET). This year, for example, 3,500 students took the CNET, though only 247 passed. From this pool, 185 passed the TABE. DOE has given out 184 packets of information about the three LPN programs in NYC to the group of students who met the CNET and TABE requirements. A total of 177 applicants have been admitted to all three LPN programs.

² Individuals with criminal backgrounds may be issued licenses to practice as a nurse, depending on the nature of the crime.

³ This small amount of over-income is not sufficient to make the students ineligible and is not considered a problem by CEO.

⁴ The HHC Director noted that HHC collects information on income from an applicant if he/she is not married. If the applicant is married, HHC collects financial information for the applicant and the spouse and that program eligibility is determined by household size.

The main difference between the CEO-sponsored LPN program and the two DOE-sponsored LPN programs is that students have to meet income eligibility requirements to be part of the CEO LPN program. The HHC director indicated that most of the students admitted to the CEO LPN program would not be able to attend the LPN program without CEO funding. In addition to the test scores, the students admitted to the CEO-funded LPN program must show commitment to the program by signing a commitment pledge to work at an HHC facility for 22 months. The final criterion for students to be part of the CEO LPN program is to participate in an interview that evaluates their commitment.

As noted above, the HHC employees who join the CEO LPN program remain on the HHC payroll while they participate in the program. HHC hires a temporary replacement for these employees, whose salary is paid out of a grant that HHC received from the Health Workforce Retraining Initiative (HWRI) from the NY State Departments of Health and Labor. However, the HHC director noted that this grant will end in March 2009. Only six HHC employees had met all the criteria to be admitted for the 2008-2009 CEO LPN program at Goldwater. These six replacement employees will be paid their salaries from the HWRI grant until March 2009, and HHC has asked the facilities (hospitals) employing these six replacement employees to continue to pay their salaries until the six employees graduate from the LPN program. HHC has sent correspondence to appropriate hospital staff about taking over the expense when the grant runs out. The HHC director indicated that the hospitals have agreed to take over this expense once the grant runs out, which shows that HHC is willing to commit resources toward the LPN program. For the 2008-2009 academic year the cohort of students in the CEO LPN program will consist of 34 low-income students and six HHC employees.

The program works with community-based organizations (CBOs) citywide to recruit students. It tries to focus on CBOs that have a health career focus (e.g., Wayside Baptist Church in Brooklyn and Bronx Shepherds). The program also reaches out to high schools (particularly those with health career programs, such as Clara Barton, Brooklyn Academy, and Hill Crest) and seeks a diverse group of participants. In addition, the program reaches out to DOE adult education programs.

Student Characteristics. Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the 30 non-HHC students and the nine HHC employees that joined the CEO LPN program for 2007-2008. Overall, the characteristics of the two groups of students do not differ much except for their income at the time of application to the program. Of the non-HHC students, 24 are female and six are male. Among the HHC students, six are female and three are male. The ages of both groups of students are similar. The largest number of students is between 25 and 44 years (24 and six respectively from the non-HHC and HHC). Four non-HHC students and one HHC student are between 21 and 24 years, and two students each from both groups are between 45 and 64 years. Of the 30 non-HHC students, 22 are black, four are Asian, three are Hispanic, and one is white. Six students have a bachelor's degree, three have an associate's degree, 16 have some college, four have a GED, and one has a high school diploma. Data on the race/ethnicity and education backgrounds of the nine HHC students were not available.

The boroughs of residence for the two groups of students in the LPN program varied somewhat. More of the non-HHC students live in Brooklyn and Queens (11 each), although only one student each from the HHC employees lives in these two boroughs (see Table 1 for more details of the residence of the students). Fifteen students do not have any dependents (11 and four from non-

HHC and HHC respectively) while nine have one dependent (eight non-HHC students and one HHC student). (See Table 1 for a complete list of the number of dependents.) Sixteen of the 30 HHC-sponsored female students are single heads of households and have children.

Wage breakdowns of these students when they entered the program varied between the two groups. All the non-HHC students earned less than \$29,103. Of these, the majority were very low income and living below the poverty line. Income eligibility requirements did not apply to HHC staff and those students had earnings ranging from \$21,840 to \$36,400.

Students are selected on a first-come/first-served basis. The program encourages bilingual students to apply. However, the director of the LPN program indicated that it is difficult to find bilingual students who meet all of the requirements.

Table 1. Characteristics of the CEO LPN Students During 2007-2008

Characteristics	Number of Non-HHC Students	Number of HHC Employees	Total
Females	24	6	30
Males	6	3	9
Age:			
21-24 years	4	1	5
25-44 years	24	6	30
45-67 years	2	2	4
Ethnicity:			
Black	22		22
Asian	4		4
Hispanic	3		3
White	1		1
Unknown	0	9	9
Education attainment:			
Bachelor's degree	6		6
Associate's degree	3		3
Some college	16		16
GED	4		4
High school diploma	1		1
Unknown	0	9	9
Borough of residence:			
Manhattan	3	3	6
Bronx	5	4	9
Brooklyn	11	1	12
Queens	11	1	12
Staten Island	0	0	0
Dependents:			
Zero	11	4	15
One	8	1	9
Two	6	0	6
Three	3	2	5
Four	0	2	2
Five or more	2	0	2
Females who are heads of household and have children	16	Not available	
Number of participants below 130% of poverty*	27	Not applicable	27
Wage breakdown at program entry/annual salary:			
Public assistance	2	0	2
Less than minimum wage	14	0	14
Minimum wage	1	0	1
\$13,031 - \$16,361	2	0	2
\$16,380 - \$19,091	1	0	1
\$19,110 - \$21,822	4	0	4
\$ 21, 840 - 29,102	6	1	7
\$ 29,103 - \$36, 382	0	7	7
More than \$36,382	0	1	1

*HHC collects information on income from an applicant if he/she is not married. If the applicant is married, HHC collects financial information for the applicant and the spouse. Program eligibility is determined by household size.

Program Services. Students receive a total of 1,152 hours of instruction during the 11 months of the program, and this meets the minimum requirements for the state. The DOE Office of Post Secondary Programs and Office of Professions have approved the curriculum for this program (although there is no accreditation for LPN programs in general). Students have a mix of classroom instruction and direct clinical experience. On instructional days, the day begins at 9 a.m. and ends at 4 p.m.; on clinical days, the day begins at 7:50 a.m. and ends at 3 p.m. Each day begins with an advisory period where students discuss issues of concern.

The 11-month CEO LPN program and the two DOE programs are condensed compared to most other traditional LPN programs run by other institutions, which span approximately 2 years. The CEO LPN program and the DOE programs are divided into three terms. During the first term, students receive instruction in nine different subject areas.⁵ During the second term, they receive instruction in five subject areas⁶ and begin their clinical rotations. During the third term, students receive instruction in six subject areas⁷ and continue their clinical rotations. Each clinical group has approximately 10 students. When clinical rotations begin, two groups are in classes, while the other two groups are in clinical rotations. The students first learn the subject matter before attending the clinical rotation related to that area of study. Most of the instruction is computer-based. The CEO LPN program reportedly uses more technology than other LPN programs.

Testing is conducted throughout the academic year, and students have to obtain a minimum of 75 percent in each class to continue to be in good standing. They cannot continue in the program if they do not maintain this minimum requirement, and they graduate from the program when they meet all the requirements. Students who maintain 85 percent in all their subjects have the option of pursuing a career to become an RN by completing an additional year of coursework through the New York State LPN-to-RN Articulation Model (NYSLRAM).⁸ DOE has an articulation agreement with the accelerated Helen Fuld LPN-to-RN program where HHC employees who have completed the LPN program and maintained the required GPA are absorbed into the RN program while working for HHC. This arrangement does not affect the 22-month work commitment to HHC, as these students will be working while completing the RN program. Additionally, the 1-year LPN work requirement is also waived for these students and they do not have to take the entrance exam to get into the RN program. Several of the CEO LPN students are reported to be interested in this option.

All the students in the 2007-2008 cohort from the CEO-sponsored LPN program graduated in June 2008, which is a rare and very important achievement. The graduation rate in the Brooklyn program was 91 percent for the 2007-2008 cohort and in the Manhattan LPN program was 90 percent. Program graduates are eligible to obtain a license and work as graduate LPNs until they sit for the board exam to obtain the LPN certification. The next challenge for graduates is passing the state board exam to obtain a license to practice as an LPN. According to the New York DOE, the statewide pass rate for 2007-2008 New York LPN programs ranges between 77 and 83 percent. During the second quarter of 2007, 448 students in New York State had taken the LPN board exam for the first time and 334 had passed (which is approximately 75%). The other DOE LPN

⁵ Practical nursing arts; vocational adjustment I; human growth and development; science-body structure and function; science-microbiology; nutrition; basic education; support skills for nurses; and library-research/tutoring. In addition, there is a lab class.

⁶ Medical/surgical nursing with geriatrics; mental health nursing; pharmacology; support skills for nurses; and library-research/tutoring.

⁷ Rehab nursing with pharmacology; pediatric nursing with pharmacology; obstetric nursing with pharmacology; support skills for nurses; vocational adjustment II; and library-research/tutoring.

⁸ Stedman, M.J. (2007). *Making it Happen: The LPN to RN Transition*. <http://www.nсна.org/pubs/imprint/aprmay07/btn.pdf>

programs' pass rate is normally in the range of 78 percent for first-time takers and about 94 percent overall. As of August 2008, none of this year's CEO students has been tested. The CEO LPN program is helping students prepare for this test and has given students last year's test so that they would feel more comfortable when they take the exam. Once a student submits the application, the state sends a testing date directly to the student. HHC reported that if the students do not pass the first time, they would help them prepare more and help them re-take the board exam. The CEO-sponsored students will be taking the board exam for the first time in September. If they are not successful at the first attempt they have to wait 3 months to repeat the exam.

Outputs and Outcomes. Table 2 presents the LPN program targets and actual numbers for key participant status categories, as well as the percentage of each target obtained. These data are reported as of June 2008. As Table 2 indicates, the target enrollment was 40 students. Although 40 students were successfully recruited, actual enrollment was 39 (98%) due to one student who was unable to enroll because he/she did not receive facility approval, as previously mentioned. None of the students who enrolled in the program dropped out, and all of them graduated on time in June 2008 (100%). These students will sit for the New York State Board exam this fall in hopes of obtaining their license to practice as LPNs. Program graduates are able to practice as graduate LPNs with a temporary permit until they pass the exam and receive the LPN license, only at long-term care facilities. They also need to pass the necessary background check before receiving their license. As noted above, the HHC students go back to their previous positions until they pass the board exam, at which time their positions will be upgraded to match their qualifications. The 30 non-HHC students had to apply to different HHC facilities – long-term care facilities – to begin work after graduation because long-term care facilities allow students who have graduated from the LPN program to work as LPNs before they sit for the Board exam to obtain the LPN certification. They are all expected to apply to HHC and not to other private facilities. Of the 30 non-HHC students, the Coler-Goldwater hospital will hire 19 of the LPN students, and nine students have been hired already. Gouverneur Healthcare Services has hired five students, while five students are waiting for placement at other facilities. HHC could not place one student because of his immigration status.⁹ The HHC director noted that incoming student applications and documents will be reviewed and processed entirely by August, one month prior to start date of the program to avoid similar experiences in the future. Of the 60 students in the prep program who met the CEO income eligibility requirements, 15 passed the TABE and the CNET and were accepted into the 2008-2009 CEO LPN program at Goldwater.

The program set an ambitious goal that every enrolled student will graduate from the program and obtain a license to work as an LPN in the City. By graduating all the students who enrolled (39), the program met the first part of this goal in the first year. However, for the program to achieve the second phase of this goal, all the students will have to pass the New York State Board exam during Fall 2008 and obtain their LPN license. Graduates are expected to fulfill a work commitment to HHC of 2 years.

⁹ The HHC Director noted that this student had an H1B visa through a previous employer when he applied to the program which made him eligible to work. However, the visa had expired during the school year and HHC is not able to sponsor LPNs.

Table 2. LPN Program's Outputs and Outcomes for 2007-2008 Academic Year

Category	Target Numbers	Actual Numbers	Percent of Target Met
Number of students who enrolled in the program	40	39 ^a	98%
Number of enrolled students who graduated from the program	39 (all enrolled students are expected to graduate)	39	100%
Number of students who pass the New York State Board exam and obtain certification	39 (all students who graduate are expected to pass the New York State Board exam and obtain certification)	Not available until fall 2008	Not available until fall 2008
Number of students who are placed in employment as LPNs: ^b At Goldwater Hospital At Gouverneur Long Term Care Facility Waiting for placement at other facilities	30 ^c	19 5 5	96%
Number of students who enrolled in prep program	60	60	100%
Number of students who successfully completed the prep program	6 out of 60 students ^d	15	250%

^aOne student enrolled but was unable to start the program.

^bOne student will not be hired due to immigration issues.

^cThe nine HHC students go back to their previous positions and will be promoted to LPN positions after they pass the Board exam.

^dThe HHC director indicated that the expectation was that at least 10 percent of the 60 students would successfully complete the prep program and be enrolled in the CEO LPN program. Having 15 students successfully complete the prep program was a very big achievement for the program.

Provider Capacity. The administrator responsible for the LPN program on a day-to-day basis is the director of nursing, who is assisted by a lead teacher, three other teachers, a staff member in charge of the labs, and a counselor. The staff members feel that they need a social worker working at least part-time with the program because they feel they are not well equipped to help some of the students who experience multiple problems. The director and all the instructors are experienced RNs. The teachers are enthusiastic about the program and are willing to step in for each other if someone is out rather than use substitute staff. It appears that the program has the capacity to provide the training and basic supports the students need. As seen during the site visit, the LPN director and faculty are particularly impressive in their dedication to the program's goals and to the students. Faculty members seem to know the issues students face and try to provide them with personal attention. Other facilities and services seem to be available in sufficient quantities to meet student needs.

Agency Management. The CEO LPN program is operated in a similar fashion to that of the two DOE LPN programs. HHC and the DOE Office of Adult and Continuing Education closely monitor the program. HHC collects demographic data on the students (including gender, ethnicity, education, age, income, number of dependents, salary, and borough of residence). DOE Office of Adult and Continuing Education collects the education progress of the students and works closely with the instructors. HHC and DOE are able to provide the data they collect to CEO. The LPN program sends attendance records of the students to HHC. Additionally, the director of the LPN

program works closely with HHC staff members who provide the necessary support for the students. For example, when the director of the LPN program informed the HHC director that students would have to spend time out of the program taking care of personal issues that might impinge on their ability to complete the program, such as applying for food stamps and housing, the HHC director (with assistance from CEO) arranged for the social service organizations to come to the program on a Saturday to work with the students. The students were able to apply for the services they needed at one time; this expedited the process and helped students better focus on their studies. The Westat/Metis team concluded that the LPN director has a very hands-on style of management.

Conclusions. As implemented, the LPN program appears to be in alignment with the CEO mission and key CEO eligibility criteria, including that students below 130 percent of poverty be served. Staff members are energetic and dedicated to achieving the goals of the program. The program has articulated specific and measurable outcomes. Data so far indicate that the program is on track to achieving its target goals—all 39 participants have graduated. By comparison, HHC noted that the graduation rate for the other two DOE programs is approximately 85 percent. Because the CEO program is based in a hospital, students have access to student support services and are taught by faculty members that are all RNs. More data (e.g., Board certification data, exam results) are needed to determine how close the program is to meeting its ultimate goals for the initial group of participants. The program hopes to repeat the same graduation rates for the new cohorts that will be recruited. Students who have graduated are beginning to find employment as LPNs.

3. Programmatic Recommendations

- **Consider revising the screening process of applicants.** HHC screens the applicants to determine their income eligibility (whether they meet the income eligibility criteria) as well as the applicants' ability to legally work in the United States before they are admitted to the CEO LPN program. We recommend that HHC review the current screening process to make it more rigorous so that the applicants admitted to the CEO LPN program meet all the eligibility criteria. It should be noted that the program was under pressure to fill the 40 slots for the first year during a very short time span and that this factor could have contributed toward the acceptance of three students who had an income of \$2,000 more than the cut-off (which was at or below 130% of poverty) and the acceptance of a student whose immigration status changed while he was in the program. With more rigorous screening, HHC will be able to screen out such students in the future.
- **Consider providing an on-site social worker.** An on-site social worker might be a valuable resource for this program. Students in the program face a number of issues related to housing, social services, child care, etc. Although the staff members are able to help and direct students to where they can get services, a social worker would be better able to deal with some of the issues the students face and guide them accordingly.