

To: House Committee on Health Care
From: Paulette J. Thabault, DNP, APRN, JD, FAANP,
Professor and Director, School of Nursing
Date: February 3, 2022
RE: Nursing

Good morning,

My name is Paulette Thabault – thank you for your time this morning and your attention to the many issues related to nursing impacting our healthcare system in VT.

I am the Director and Professor for the School of Nursing at Norwich University where I have been for the past 6 years. I have been a nurse for almost 50 years and a nurse practitioner for nearly 40 years. During my career I have held several private and public sector positions including in hospital and community nursing, primary care, state government as Deputy Commissioner and Commissioner at BISHCA over 5 years, chief nurse practitioner officer for CVS minute clinics and in academia at Northeastern University and now at Norwich.

I am currently the Chair of the Board for the Central Vermont Medical Center and also serve on the Board for Central VT Home Health and Hospice. I am very aware of the many complex issues related to the nursing shortage, including the high level of nurses retiring, the high rates of nurse turnover, burnout leading to nurses exiting the profession and the serious financial impact the nursing shortage and the necessity of travelers is having on every part of our health care system

Norwich has:

1. a traditional BS in Nursing Program - it is 4 years in length
2. An accelerated track for individuals with a previous college degree who want to enter nursing, this track is 5 consecutive semesters or 18 months.

3. RN - BSN – 100% online for RNs completing a bachelor’s degree

Current enrollment: traditional 171 Accelerated 10

The data below is our best estimate based on information we have gathered.

Year	# Graduates	# Tested in VT	# Military Contracts
2022	58 Anticipated		6
2021	64	30	13
2020	44	27	?
2019	30	22	?
2018	35		?

Faculty:

We have 9 full time faculty positions including a Clinical Placement Coordinator who dedicates nearly all her time to finding clinical placements for our students. 3 of our faculty, including me are tenured and Doctorly prepared, 4 are Master prepared and 3 of them are in doctoral programs. We have 2 open positions.

We rely on adjunct instructors to run our program.
As an example, for the current academic year:

Number of adjuncts we use **for clinical instructing** Fall 9 Spring 11
Number of adjuncts needed **for didactic teaching** Fall 4 Spring 8

Clinical Affiliates:

Our program requires **520 clinical hours**

We place students at UVMHC and DHMC as well as most of the community hospitals within a reasonable drive. We also have students at the Veteran’s Administration Hospital in White River Junction and Rutland Regional Medical Center.

For Community health our students are in home health, the school system, provider practices, community health centers and senior living locations.

4. Graduate nursing programs

- a. Nurse Educator
- b. Healthcare Systems Leadership
- c. Informatics
- d. We have just implemented three Nurse Practitioner (NP) Tracks
 - a. Family Nurse Practitioner
 - b. Psychiatric Mental Health NP
 - c. Adult Gerontology Acute Care NP

Graduate School enrollments have declined for Nurse Educator and Health care systems leadership tracks and have robust enrollment in our new NP tracks.

MS in Nursing Graduates 2017-2021

2017 59
2018 30
2019 23
2020 23
2021 22

Concentration/Track	Current Enrollment
Nurse Educator	14
Health Care Leadership	9
Informatics	1
Family Nurse Practitioner	30
Gerontology – Acute Care	19
Psychiatric Mental Health	53