



STATE OF IOWA

Governor Kim Reynolds
Lt. Governor Adam Gregg

BOARD OF NURSING
Kathleen R. Weinberg, MSN, RN
Executive Director

Memorandum

To: Nursing Education Programs

From: Jimmy A. Reyes, Associate Director of Practice and Education

Date: April 2, 2020

Re: Education questions

The Iowa Board of Nursing has received a few questions regarding the Governor's proclamations and interpretation of Board rules. Below are some questions and answers that may be useful as you continue to make changes impacting nursing education in Iowa.

What type of simulation/activities meets the criteria of simulation?

Our rules define "Lab/simulation" as "activities that mimic the reality of a clinical environment and that are designed to demonstrate procedures, decision making and critical thinking through interactive experiences" (655-2.1).

Our rules make no mention of high-fidelity simulation, and thus we cannot now retroactively require a program, after its curriculum was already approved by the board, to use high-fidelity simulation. The Board approves programs for up to six years, and when the program is up for approval the Board can inquire into the types of simulations that the program uses.

The Board cannot list every possible lab or simulation that would meet its definition. We utilize the above standard to allow programs to take advantage of new technologies or approaches without having to wait for the board to update its rules every single time something new is developed. If a student is concerned that a lab or simulation does not sufficiently "mimic the reality of clinical environment," the student is free to contact the Board.

What is the timeframe to implement simulation experiences based on the Governor's proclamation?

The Governor's emergency powers under Iowa Code chapter 29C only exist during the duration of a public emergency. The rule was waived as part of the Governor's response to the COVID-19 disaster, which has been declared a state of emergency.

The Governor is only empowered to waive rules during the duration of the emergency, and the Proclamations are tied to the expected date the state of public emergency will end, which is April 30.

The Governor could extend her emergency Proclamations again beyond April 30th. If so, the rules will continue to be suspended for as long as the emergency proclamations are in effect.

If students are not able to complete their course requirements by April 30, and the proclamation is not extended because the public emergency has ended, we will reach out to programs, see how much instruction is remaining (didactic, clinical, simulation, laboratory, and preceptorship), and work to find a solution.

Can nursing education programs implement a paid preceptorship?

There are no rules which would prohibit a nursing program to partner with a healthcare system to provide paid preceptorships. This would be an agreement between the nursing program and the agency. For the student to receive credit as part of their curriculum and graduation requirement the preceptorship would still have to be a requirement of a course and have faculty oversight.

Can a nursing program decrease their number of clinical hours?

Pursuant to IAC 655, Chapter 2, the administrative rules do not mandate a specific number of hours required for didactic course work or clinical.

IAC 655, 2.10(3)"b"(3) & (4) and 2.10(3) "c" (3),(4),(5) & (6) rules do require the areas where "learning experiences" and "content" are needed.