

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That:

(1) The Maryland Higher Education Commission and the State Board of Nursing shall establish a task force that includes representation of hospitals, nursing homes, and home care agencies to investigate the feasibility of developing--a--2-year program--leading--to--an-Associate-Degree-in-Nursing-in-which-the student-is-eligible-to-sit-for--the--Licensed--Practical--Nursing examination--after-the-first-calendar-year-and-for-the-Registered Nurse-examination-after-the--second--year: creating a Licensed Practical Nursing component within the Associate Degree of Nursing Program that, if successfully completed, will satisfy the requirements for taking the Licensed Practical Nursing examination.

(2) The Commission task force shall also investigate the feasibility of awarding advanced credit standing to unlicensed nursing care providers in college-based Licensed Practical Nursing and-Associate-Degree-Nursing programs, either upon the completion of noncredit health care courses, through demonstration of satisfactory levels of proficiency in subject matter covered by noncredit health care courses, or in any other way that is considered satisfactory by the Commission task force.

(3) The Commission task force shall also investigate the feasibility of establishing a program to assess, and subsequently address, any educational deficiencies of existing unlicensed nursing care providers to enable them to enter into Licensed Practical Nurse and Registered Nurse education programs.

(4) The Commission-shall-require task force, based on its investigations, may recommend that community colleges actively develop cooperative relationships with local health care service facilities in order that unlicensed nursing care providers employed in those facilities can have access to all nursing education programs offered by the community colleges.

(5) The Commission-shall-require task force, based on its investigations, may recommend that community colleges publicize the availability of nursing scholarships, the State Loan Repayment Program, and existing educational articulation agreements in order to encourage the supply of nurses into areas of nursing shortage, to promote continuing education for nursing professionals, and generally to promote recruitment into the nursing profession.

(6) The Commission task force shall report its findings and make recommendations to the Legislative Policy Committee, the Senate Economic and Environmental Affairs Committee, and the House Constitutional and Administrative Law Committee by September 1, 1989.