

OFFICE OF PRACTICE AND ENGAGEMENT (OPE)

The office of Practice and Engagement (OPE) was established in 2009 and provides a research and learning laboratory where evidence based practice and education occur. The OPE fosters the growth of clinical science and oversees the just UT Nursing for the School of Nursing.

Our charge is to create an accessible, caring, high quality, culturally proficient and effective health care delivery system for individuals, families and communities.

The UT Nursing Office of Practice and Engagement (OPE) provides School of Nursing faculty members with the opportunity to:

- 1) Engage in a comprehensive practice environment, providing services to the students, faculty, and staff of UT Health Science Center.
- 2) Provide consultation to improve healthcare delivery systems in the community, hospitals and other healthcare delivery sites.
- 3) Provide direct healthcare services to individuals, families and populations in the community

Overview

1. The office of Practice and Engagement (“Practice”) is responsible for all practice settings and practice opportunities established or implemented by the School of Nursing (SoN). The “Practice” operates according to **Bylaws** for the **School of Nursing Faculty Practice Plan**. The **Bylaws**, established in 2013, are annually reviewed. The Vice Dean of Practice and Engagement is responsible for upholding the Bylaws. The office of the Vice Dean of Practice is located within the SoN.
2. The practice is responsible for upholding the mission, vision and values of the SoN with particular attention to the mission of *social justice*.
3. The Vice Dean of Practice and Engagement is responsible for ensuring that the Practice Plan established by the Faculty Practice Plan Committee in 2013 and approved by the full Faculty Assembly is implemented and upheld.
4. The “Practice” provides oversight for multiple clinical settings that include, but are not limited to, the Employee Health and Wellness Center (EHWC), the Student Health and Wellness Center (SHC), Healy Murphy High School, AVANCE Child Care Centers and the Refugee Clinic.
5. Exploring additional practice sites is within the role of the Vice Dean of Practice who receives approvals from appropriate University officials.
6. The “Practice” provides oversight for executive nursing positions in other areas of the University including that of the Chief Nursing Officer, Assistant Dean at the UT Health Science Center-MD Anderson/ Mays Cancer Center and Director of the Biggs Institute for Aging.

7. The “Practice” provides oversight for the Department of Life Ling Learning, which supports accessible continuing education and is an accredited provider of continuing nursing education by the American Nurses Credentialing Center’s commission of Accreditation.
8. In an effort to support the “Practice”, the University provides the infrastructure that enables the SoN practicing faculty to comply with statutory obligations, memoranda of agreement and contracts. These infrastructure services include but are not limited to:
 - a. Legal Compliance
 - b. Credentialing
 - c. Physician collaboration
 - d. Billing
 - e. EPIC (electronic health record)
9. The “Practice” provides opportunities for faculty to work outside of the academic setting in roles that closely meet their area of nursing expertise. The “Practice” ensures that all contracts and memoranda of agreement are in place with agencies and community partners that will be engaging the services of practicing faculty. Examples include but are not limited to:
 - a. Data analysis at University Hospital
 - b. Lactation consultation at University hospital
 - c. Chart reviews for the city of San Antonio (Fetal Infant Mortality Review/ FIMR)
 - d. Consultation for program development at the Mays Cancer Center
 - e. Community Assessment

Office of Practice and Engagement Functions

The OPE supports the “Practice” by working closely with faculty to identify opportunities for practice and to prepare the individual faculty members for the requirements of the practice. The process of credentialing begins in the OPE as well as reporting of time spent in practice. The OPE bills for the hours each faculty member practices at their respective clinical site. Revenues are submitted to the “Practice” for distribution per the approved Faculty Practice Plan.

Office of Practice and Engagement Organization

The Vice Dean of Practice and Engagement reports directly to the Dean of the School of Nursing. Communication channels exist between the Vice Dean of Practice and Engagement and the other Vice, Associate Deans and Directors. The Dean, Vice Deans and Associate Deans meet regularly in an effort to ensure that the vision and mission of the school is integrated into research, education, clinical practice and community engagement. OPE consists of the Vice Dean, the Assistant Dean of the Mays Cancer Center, the Wellness Coordinator, Budget Analyst, Administrative Assistant, Manager of Lifelong learning, Clinic Manager.

Philosophy

The purpose of the Nursing Faculty Practice Plan and the OPE is to promote excellence in teaching, research, clinical service and healthcare administration by working with faculty to keep them engaged in their area of expertise. Maintaining clinical, research or administrative proficiency, and national certification, when applicable, is an expectation of all SoN faculty. The “Practice” provides faculty the

opportunity to identify their area of interest or expertise and the “Practice” facilitates identification of opportunities that complement these interests and support the “Practice”. The “Practice” supports research and scholarship by providing faculty and students opportunities to identify diverse areas of clinical inquiry.

The “Practice” exemplifies the SoN mission of social justice by delivering healthcare services to underserved individuals, communities and populations in diverse clinical settings regardless of their ability to pay. The “Practice” is working towards a sustainable model of providing quality primary healthcare services to all by ensuring a payer mix that will support the school’s mission.

The “Practice” supports the SoN education mission by providing diverse community based clinical experiences to students at the undergraduate, graduate and doctoral levels of study. Students are provided opportunities to engage with individuals, communities and populations and are expected to demonstrate understanding of the social determinants of health.

The Department of Lifelong Learning (DLL) became part of the OPE in 2016. DLL programs are based on the belief that Learning is a lifelong, self-directed process encompassing the cognitive, psychomotor and affective domains. The department serves as a catalyst for providing exciting, accessible. Professional, state of the art quality continuing education programs for enhancing the professional growth and development of local regional, national and international nurses.