

AIT Preceptor Development Work Group Update

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The Administrator-in-Training (AIT)/Preceptor Development Work Group was formed to address several critical needs on the national level surrounding the AIT experience. The American College of Health Care Administrators (ACHCA) and the National Association of Long Term Care Administrator Boards (NAB) jointly commissioned this group, and a charter was developed outlining their expectations. Lisa Hahn, Executive Director of the Virginia Board of Licensure, serves as the co-chair with me.

To address these needs in Phase 1, the Work Group initially developed four sub-groups to:

1. Collect current state regulatory requirements,
2. Review existing AIT Preceptor curricula,
3. Market the need for preceptors, and
4. Address financial barriers.

All groups have concluded their work, except for addressing the financial barriers which is always a concern throughout the industry. The work group has turned their attention to Phase 2.

New sub-groups are under development to:

1. Develop model standards for AIT programs,
2. Develop an online, module-based Preceptor Training curriculum,
3. Develop a career development toolkit for AITs, and
4. Continue to address financial barriers.

Phase One Work Group Updates/Conclusions

Regulatory Requirements

The first sub-group compiled the AIT and Preceptor regulatory requirements for all states. All state executives have reviewed this document for verification.

Existing AIT Preceptor Curricula

This sub-group undertook the task of identifying curricula currently being used nationally. They found that there are few programs available with little consistency. Some states do not require preceptor training. In other states, the curriculum is proprietary. Training may address only state board reporting processes. The programs from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire and Indiana Health Care Association seemed particularly strong. In developing our curricula, we expect to use some content being utilized within the ACHCA Mentoring program.

Marketing

This sub-group discussed language to use in persuading veteran administrators to become preceptors. They examined the reasons why administrators don't become preceptors along with the perceived barriers including time commitments, money, lack of qualified candidates, lack of corporate support, lack of training to be a preceptor, and longevity/success of AIT candidates.

This group has suspended their efforts until the preceptor training curriculum is developed. Matching the marketing efforts with the curriculum to prepare preceptors will be key to success.

Financial Barriers

The financial sub-group began by soliciting ideas on obtaining

financial assistance for AIT programs. Many AITs must forego any type of salary or stipend during their AIT programs, which may last six months or more. This creates a hardship, particularly for candidates in a mid-career transition. The Federal Department of Labor guidelines create some questions about the legality of unpaid internships. Several ideas are being considered for feasibility. While it is doubtful that we will find one strategy that will fund all AIT programs, we expect to provide a listing of potential funding sources for preceptors to consider.

Pending Projects

Several projects and concepts are under development and/or being considered:

1. We can market the concept for veteran administrators to leave a legacy through leadership development. This message might be paired with the ACHCA Academy of Long-Term Care Leadership and Development's legacy fundraising message.
2. We expect to use an online model for preceptor training. We envision a program with a few modules, and the curriculum would address universal learning objectives for a preceptor with an emphasis on coaching and mentoring. States could have the option of an add-on module to address any state-specific content. This training itself should offer continuing education credits.
3. The idea of an AIT Centers of Excellence has come forth. Some organizations have a corporate vision of hosting AITs frequently; we are currently talking with two such organizations that might become magnet sites for training AITs.
4. An Outstanding Preceptor Award is being proposed for the ACHCA Awards program. Once the eligibility criteria are approved by the ACHCA Board, it is anticipated that this will roll out in 2016.
5. We are exploring additional functionality for the AIT community within ACHCAConnect, including the potential of matching preceptors and AITs.
6. The first sub-group will be developing AIT model standards that will incorporate NAB's new Professional Practice Analysis. Meanwhile, the NAB Education Committee will also be looking at academic standards. Coordination and consistency between academic and non-academic AIT programs will be critical.
7. The State Governance Committee of NAB is tackling the issue of AIT experience portability across state lines.
8. We continue to keep the two sponsoring organizations updated through reports to ACHCA's Education Committee and NAB's Executive Committee.

When this group began, it was known that the work would be monumental. Support from various stakeholders nationally has been gaining momentum. We are grateful for the collaboration between ACHCA and NAB, giving this work group the traction it needs in order to effect meaningful change.