

Diagnosing shortage, Felician bolsters programs for nursing

BY MICHAEL C. GABRIELE
Editor

LODI and RUTHERFORD—"Family health is at the center of all our nursing education programs," Dr. Muriel Shore, Felician College's dean of nursing, said. "Like the rest of the country, New Jersey is bracing for healthcare reform initiatives that will provide healthcare access to all."

Nursing, like other health professions, is suffering from a critical national shortage, according to Shore. As an example, she pointed out that last year New Jersey hospitals provided care to 2.7 million uninsured patients seeking health services. Nurses typically work on the front lines of delivering family healthcare services, so the looming shortage represents a dilemma as well as an opportunity.

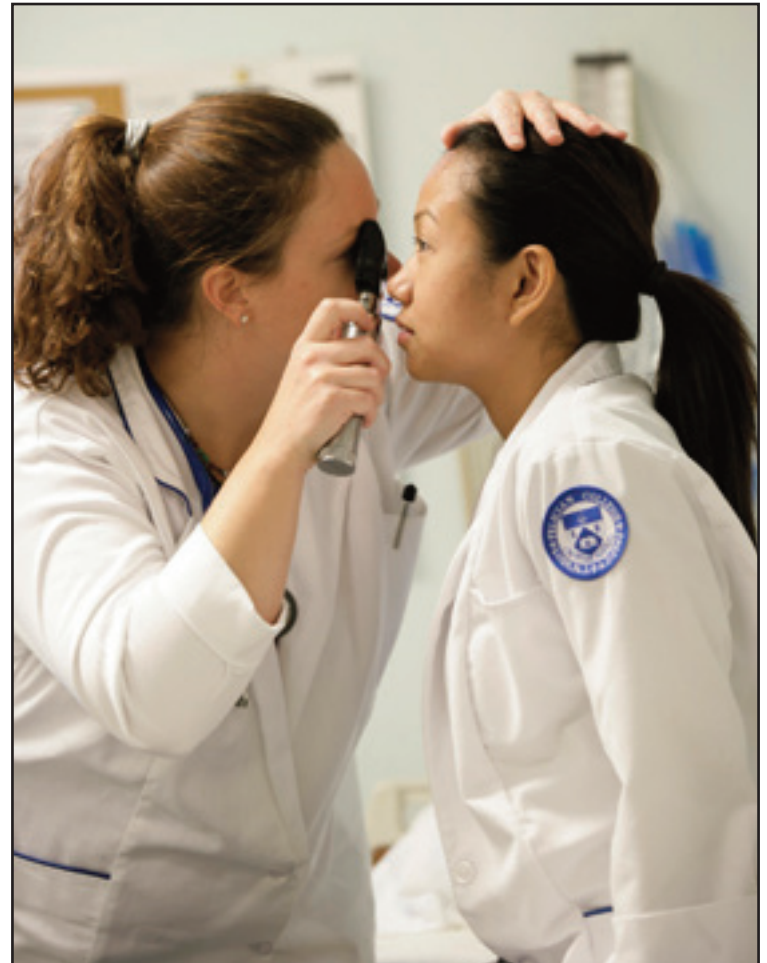
"As more people enter the healthcare system and avail themselves of comprehensive services, we have to be sure we have an adequate supply of all types of health professionals to provide these needed services," Shore explained. "Felician considers the nursing shortage situation very critical and as our nursing programs expand we want to be sure we are preparing providers at all levels to deliver these essential healthcare services."

In a recent development that illustrates the focus on nursing education, the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education Accreditation (CCNE) awarded Felician College's Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program a 10-year accreditation, the maximum given by CCNE. The accreditation followed a rigorous evaluation process that included a three-day site visit by Washington-based CCNE, a national accreditation agency.

Felician's nursing program has an enrollment of more than 650 undergraduate and graduate students. The college offers a four-year baccalaureate pre-licensure nursing program; a 19-month "fast-track" program for Registered Nurses who are seeking a bachelor's degree; and an online master's program for advanced practice nurses in the area of family healthcare.

There also is a new program designed to prepare nurses for nurse-educator positions in colleges and community healthcare facilities. In addition, Felician's business division is working with the nursing school to develop an interdisciplinary bachelor and master's degree in healthcare administration to meet the needs of those working in the healthcare field.

Felician's pre-licensure nursing program is based at the college's Lodi campus. The RN-BSN fast-track cohort program is offered on the Lodi campus as well as in healthcare locations throughout the state.



Submitted photo
Felician College nursing students engage in hands-on learning in the Nursing Resource Center. Dr. Muriel Shore, Felician's dean of nursing, said the college's nursing courses incorporate cultural family influences, which typically have a significant effect on the care provided and the patient's ability to achieve wellness.