



**Innovative  
Approaches to  
Providing Basic  
Skills Education in  
Healthcare Career  
Pathways**

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# Why focus on basic skills?



- What do basic skills mean in career pathway context?
  - Reading, writing, listening, speaking, math, English language proficiency, and digital literacy needed to **enter** and **succeed** in training **at each step** in a career **pathway**. Includes adult ed. *and* college remediation.
- Who could benefit from more help with basic skills?
  - Some individuals lack the basic skills and/or English language proficiency to get access to even **entry-level training**.
  - Others have skills high enough to access entry-level occupational training but not enough to gain entry to **higher-level programs**.
- Bottom line is basic skills services are critical both for **access** and for **advancement** along the pathway.

# Time is the enemy

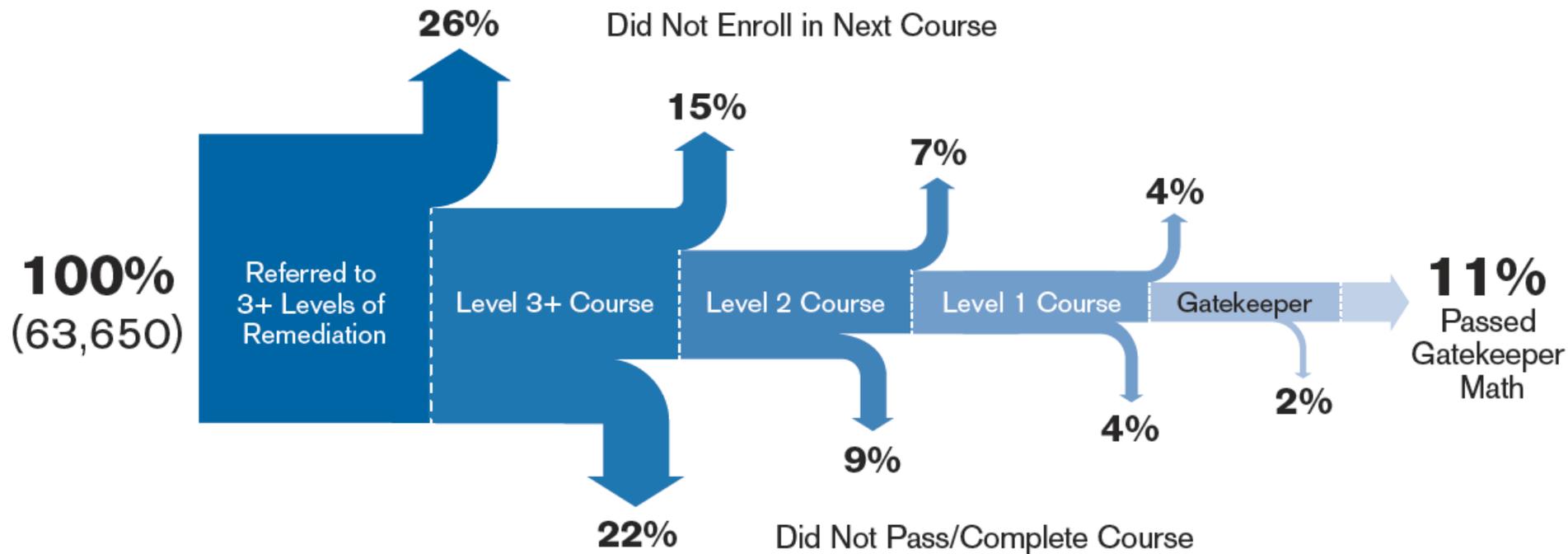


- Why are innovative basic skills strategies needed?
- Traditional sequences of adult education, English language instruction, and college developmental education take too long.
- “Exponential attrition:” what is important is how many students move through the entire educational pathway over time, not just pass rates within a single level, course, or year.
- In addition, some students who could succeed without remediation are kept out of training by overreliance on a “cut” score on a single test. Poor predictive power.

# Community College Research Center on Developmental Education Completion



## Student Progression Through the Developmental Math Sequence<sup>21</sup>

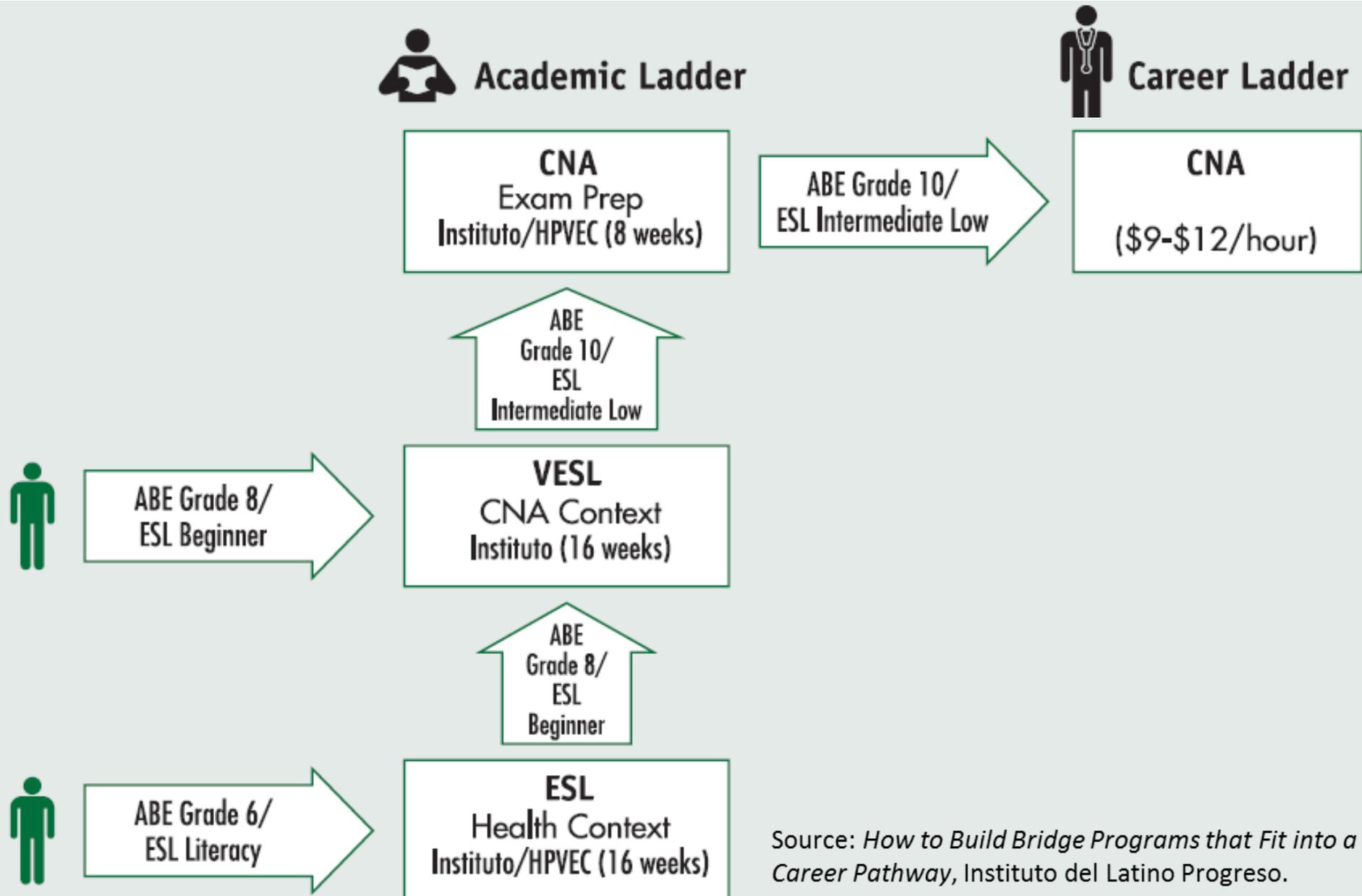


# Strategies for basic skills innovation



- Threshold questions in choosing innovation strategy:
  - Does it shorten the path to a healthcare credential? Does it make basic skills more relevant to student goals?
- *Accelerate* progress through basic skills and shorten the overall timeline for underprepared students to complete healthcare credentials
- *Contextualize* basic skills content to healthcare education and/or academic gatekeeper courses in specific pathway
- Provide opportunities for *concurrent enrollment* in contextualized basic skills and healthcare education/trg.
  - May involve integrated instruction classes (I-BEST type models), paired classes (also known as corequisites), or both.

# Carreras En Salud – Pre-CNA Bridge



# Carreras En Salud – Pre-LPN Bridge



Academic Ladder



Career Ladder

ABE Grade 12.9/  
ESL Advanced;  
Ready for College

**PRE-LPN  
A**  
Instituto (16 weeks)

ABE Grade 11/  
ESL Intermediate; EKG and  
Phlebotomy and CNA

**PCT**  
(\$10-\$16/hour)

ABE Grade 11/  
ESL Intermediate High;  
Pre-LPN A  
and/or CNA

**PRE-LPN  
B**  
Instituto (16 weeks)

ABE  
Grade 10/  
ESL  
Intermediate Low

ABE Grade 11/  
ESL Intermediate High;  
Pre-LPN A and/or CNA

ABE Grade 10/  
ESL Intermediate

Source: *How to Build Bridge Programs that Fit into a Career Pathway*, Instituto del Latino Progreso.

# Madison College's Patient Care Pathway Program (PCPP)



- Accelerates entry into healthcare degree or diploma programs for those with skill levels too low (typically 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> grade) to meet entry criteria or those who have struggled with math or science in the past
- Contextualizes developmental education instruction, either to healthcare field or to a gateway course in pathway
  - Patient Care 2 combines Chemistry, Applied Math for Chemistry, and Written Communication for Healthcare. e.g. To write incident reports, math and chemistry teachers coordinate closely and flag problems students may have.
  - PCA 2 completion meets the admissions requirements for all of the college's health programs *without needing to retest on Compass*.
- Provides a range of support services to encourage students to complete classes, address issues they may face, and plan for future
- Rigorous study of effectiveness underway for OPRE/ACF as part of Pathways for Advancing Careers and Education (PACE)

# Madison College Patient Care Pathway

**Good Candidates:** Individuals interested in Health Careers who have placement test scores too low to begin the programs in the traditional manner or have struggled in math or science in the past. Students may start in Patient Care Nursing Assistant, Patient Care 1 or Patient Care 2 depending on their health program of interest, placement test scores and previous coursework.

## Education

### Patient Care Nursing Assistant

Certified Nursing Assistant

Support Classes: Academic Reading collaboratively taught with adult basic education and content area instructor

For students with a COMPASS Reading 61-80. Students who have failed, withdrew or earned a D in Certified Nursing Assistant are eligible regardless of scores.

### Patient Care 2

Chemistry

Applied Math for Chemistry

Written Communication Contextualized for the Healthcare Profession

For students with at least one score in the following COMPASS range: Pre Algebra 30-Algebra 29, Reading 80+ Writing 70+. Students who failed, withdrew or earn a D in Chemistry in the past are also eligible regardless of scores.

### Patient Care 1

Body Structure and Function

Medical Terminology

Support Classes: Academic Reading, Math and Prep for Success, team taught with adult basic education and content area instructor

For students with at least one score in the following COMPASS range: Pre Algebra 30-Algebra 29, Reading 61-80, Writing 31-70. Students who failed, withdrew or earned a D in Medical Terminology or Body Structure and Function in the past are also eligible regardless of scores.

### Health Degrees and Diplomas

Program Choices:

Associate Degree Nursing  
Dental Hygienist  
Medical Lab Technician  
Surgical Technologist  
Occupational Therapy Assistant  
Physical Therapy Assistant  
Radiography  
Respiratory Therapy  
Veterinary Technician

### Health Diploma Programs

Program Choices:

Medical Coding Specialist      Medical Assistant  
Therapeutic Massage              Optometric Technician

## Employment

### Entry Level Employment

Graduates report average wages as \$11.46 per hour.  
Graduates are typically employed as Nursing Assistants

### Mid-Level Employment

Graduates report wages ranging from \$12.72 to \$16.85 per hour. Jobs and wages vary depending program choice.

### Upper-Mid Level Employment

Graduates report wages ranging from \$17.82 to \$24.17 per hour. Jobs vary and wages depending on program choice.

# Considerations for overall program design



- Think about the whole pathway from the beginning.
  - HPOG is a career pathways approach. Without advancement to higher level training and better paying jobs, a program is not a pathway, it is just short-term training. Many need basic skills support to advance.
- Who is your target population, and how do their basic skills compare to what is required to enter and succeed at each step in the pathway?
- How can you shorten the overall pathway for those who need basic skills help and make basic skills instruction more relevant to students' goals?
  - Not enough just to contextualize basic skills instruction if you do not shorten the timeline needed to complete a healthcare credential.
  - Also not enough to accelerate basic skills if you do not eliminate such barriers as requirements to retest on placement exams.

# Considerations for overall program design (continued)



- No one partner at the local level can pull this off alone.
  - Basic skills providers, whether in the adult education system or in college developmental education, lack sufficient technical knowledge of healthcare program courses and other required academic courses to contextualize content on their own.
  - Similarly, CTE and math/science faculty often lack understanding of how best to serve academically underprepared students.
- Figure out the end game for sustainability from the beginning.
  - Private and public special grants might jumpstart innovation, but it will end when the grants end unless thought is given up-front to which ongoing funding streams can support new models.

# Resources



- Nuts and bolts of creating basic skills bridge and integrated courses
  - Resources for practitioners on Washington State’s I-BEST program.  
[http://www.sbctc.ctc.edu/college/\\_e-ibest-planning-resources.aspx](http://www.sbctc.ctc.edu/college/_e-ibest-planning-resources.aspx) and  
[http://www.sbctc.ctc.edu/college/abepds/ibest\\_ccrc\\_report\\_december2012.pdf](http://www.sbctc.ctc.edu/college/abepds/ibest_ccrc_report_december2012.pdf)
  - *Creating A Successful Bridge Program: A “How to” Guide*. Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and the Illinois Community College Board.  
[http://www.iccb.org/pdf/shiftinggears/iccb\\_2012bridgeguide\\_web\\_rev\\_oct2012.pdf](http://www.iccb.org/pdf/shiftinggears/iccb_2012bridgeguide_web_rev_oct2012.pdf)
  - LaGuardia College NYBEST (New York Basic Education and Skills Training Programs) health care examples and sample lesson plans.  
<http://www.laguardia.edu/ACE/Programs/CCPI/NY-BEST/>
  - Women Employed and City Colleges of Chicago. Free, downloadable adult education lesson plans for healthcare career pathways.  
<http://womenemployed.org/adult-education-lesson-plans>
- More information on featured examples
  - *How to Build Bridge Programs that Fit into a Career Pathway*. Instituto del Progreso Latino.  
[http://www.idpl.org/images/publicationsPDFs/Instituto2010\\_HowToBuildBridgePrograms%20final.pdf](http://www.idpl.org/images/publicationsPDFs/Instituto2010_HowToBuildBridgePrograms%20final.pdf)

# Resources (continued)



- *Innovative Strategies for Increasing Self-Sufficiency Career Pathways Profile: Madison Area Technical College Patient Care Pathway Program.* Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, HHS. [http://careerpathways.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/ISIS\\_MATC-Profile.pdf](http://careerpathways.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/ISIS_MATC-Profile.pdf)
- Overviews of innovative basic skills strategies
  - *Making Skills Everyone’s Business.* Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education, U.S. Department of Education. <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/pi/AdultEd/making-skills.pdf>
  - *Farther, Faster.* CLASP. <http://www.clasp.org/admin/site/publications/files/Farther-Faster.pdf>
  - Community College Research Center practitioner packet on developmental education reform. <http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/publications/designing-meaningful-developmental-reform.html>
  - *New Study of the California Acceleration Project.* LearningWorks. <http://www.learningworksca.org/new-study-of-the-california-accelerated-project-large-and-robust-gains-in-student-completion-of-college-english-and-math/>