Innovative Approaches to Providing Basic Skills Education in Healthcare Career Pathways

Julie Strawn
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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.
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

100% (63,650) Referred to 3+ Levels of Remediation

26% Did Not Enroll in Next Course

22% Did Not Pass/Complete Course

15% Level 3+ Course

7% Level 1 Course

4% Level 2 Course

4% Gatekeeper

2% Passed Gatekeeper Math

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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

Academic Ladder

CNA Exam Prep
Instituto/HPVEC (8 weeks)

ABE Grade 10/ESL Intermediate Low

VESL
CNA Context
Instituto (16 weeks)

ESL Health Context
Instituto/HPVEC (16 weeks)

ABE Grade 8/ESL Beginner

Career Ladder

ABE Grade 10/ESL Intermediate Low

CNA
($9-$12/hour)

Source: How to Build Bridge Programs that Fit into a Career Pathway, Instituto del Latino Progreso.
Carreras En Salud – Pre-LPN Bridge

Academic Ladder

- ABE Grade 12.9/ESL Advanced; Ready for College
- ABE Grade 11/ESL Intermediate High; Pre-LPN A and/or CNA
- PRE-LPN A
  - Instituto (16 weeks)
- ABE Grade 11/ESL Intermediate High; Pre-LPN A and/or CNA
  - ABE Grade 11/ESL Intermediate; EKG and Phlebotomy and CNA
  - PCT
    - ($10-$16/hour)

Career Ladder

- PRE-LPN B
  - Instituto (16 weeks)
- ABE Grade 10/ESL Intermediate
- ABE Grade 10/ESL Intermediate Low

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 8th-10th 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

Patient Care 2
Chemistry
Applied Math for Chemistry
Written Communication Contextualized for the Healthcare Profession

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

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 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 Diploma Programs
Program Choices:
- Medical Coding Specialist
- Therapeutic Massage
- Medical Assistant
- Optometric Technician

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.

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 on 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.
  
  
  - 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/](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.

- More information on featured examples
  
  - *How to Build Bridge Programs that Fit into a Career Pathway.* Instituto del Progreso Latino.
Resources (continued)

– **Innovative Strategies for Increasing Self-Sufficiency Career Pathways**

  ▪ Overviews of innovative basic skills strategies

    [http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/pi/AdultEd/making-skills.pdf](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](http://www.clasp.org/admin/site/publications/files/Farther-Faster.pdf)
