

**Title: *Enhancing APRN Workforce Competencies: Combatting the Opioid Crisis in Rural and Underserved WA State Correctional Facilities***

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**Background:** The clinical priority that this project addresses is *opioid crisis/mental health (HRSA priority)*. This project will prepare Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (**PMHNP**) students to practice in rural and underserved communities with enhanced skills for the most urgent healthcare issues, Opioid Use Disorder and Chronic Pain. The targeted communities comprise the Washington State Department Corrections (**DOC**) that houses approximately 17,000 inmates in 12 correctional facilities (17 healthcare clinics) in Washington State. Notably, the majority are located in rural areas that have a shortage of psychiatric mental health providers knowledgeable about Medication Assisted Treatment (**MAT**) competencies. Opioid use disorder and/or chronic pain affects an estimated 30% of the DOC population. Treatment of opioid use disorder and chronic pain requires establishing a pipeline to recruit highly skilled Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (**APRNs**) to correctional settings.

**Purpose:** The primary purpose of this proposed project is to enhance Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (**PMHNP**) training in the treatment of opioid use disorder and chronic pain in preparation for post-graduate employment in underserved rural DOC clinics and other rural health agencies. An innovative academic-clinical partnership—between the DOC and the University of Washington School of Nursing (**SoN**) Doctor of Nursing (**DNP**)-PMHNP track—will support targeted curriculum development and intensive clinical training in opioid use disorder and chronic pain treatment competencies.

**Project Aims:** Leveraging the existing DOC-SoN academic-clinical partnership, the project will: 1) enhance APRN and other psychiatric mental health providers competencies in the treatment of opioid use disorder and chronic pain, and will establish treatment protocols in rural DOC clinics; 2) develop, implement and evaluate curricula content (DNP-PMHNP track) on opioid use disorder and chronic pain with an emphasis on rural mental health communities; 3) establish extended (3- 6 months) clinical immersion traineeships and DNP project opportunities for PMHNP students in rural DOC clinics; 4) recruit, train and evaluate OUD/CP competencies and teaching effectiveness for clinical preceptors from rural DOC clinics; and 5) recruit DNP-PMHNP students from diverse backgrounds to enter practice in correctional healthcare and other rural health agencies.

**Outcome Evaluations:** 1) DOC and SoN along with UW experts in opioid use disorder and chronic pain establish, deliver and evaluate medication-assisted and chronic pain treatment protocols with full telepsychiatry capacity at DOC clinics, which will be generalizable to other rural communities; 2) integration of a new rural mental health component (rural mental health foundation and telehealth) and opioid use disorder and chronic pain management into the PMHNP curriculum; 3) five trainees receive traineeship awards (\$22,000/year) and complete the extended clinical traineeship; 4) a minimum of 10 clinical preceptors develop competencies (knowledge, skills) at DOC clinics with an emphasis on rural mental health (telehealth), opioid use disorder and chronic pain; and 5) increase (>10%) the proportion of underrepresented minority (URM) students in the PMHNP program.

**Funding Preference:** Funding preference request based on Qualification 1 (Rural Preference) and 2 (Underserved Preference).