Expanding and Enhancing Senior Care University Programs Nationwide

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BACKGROUND AND ABSTRACT
- The field of health care administration in senior care education lacks a strong portfolio of educational programs across the United States.
- Facing a growing senior population and an urge to transform the current landscape of care for older adults, the United States needs to develop well-prepared, strong leaders in the health care administration field.
- Additionally, of concern is that more administrators are leaving the profession than entering it.
- One essential piece in developing leaders is an availability of strong university-based senior care administration programs.
- The long-term care (LTC) administration profession is facing a talent crisis that needs to be addressed with a coordinated, well thought-out plan targeted at enhancing and expanding the quality and quantity of robust senior care administration education programs across the country.

RATIONALE
- Since there are few strong senior care administration educational programs, the identification of key attributes, factors, and requirements for strong academic programs need to be identified.
- Dr. Douglas Olson has been granted a sabbatical project to develop a national strategy for enhancing existing and developing new university programs in health care and aging services administration.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS
- Randy Lindner, President and CEO, NAB and the NAB Foundation
- Dr. David Gifford, Senior VP of Quality, AHCA
- Chris Mason, AHCA/NHCA Board
- Dr. Robyn Stone, Executive Director, LeadingAge Center for Applied Research
- Cecilia Sepp, President and CEO, ACHCA
- Robert Kramer, CEO, National Investment Center
- Paul Williams, VP of Education, Argentum
- Anne Montgomery, Senior Policy Analyst, Altarum Institute
- Steve Chies, Principal, Care Paradigms
- Julianne Williams, CEO, Dycoa
- Otis Woods, Wisconsin Department of Health Services
- Dr. Nicholas Castle, Professor, University of Pittsburgh
- Dr. Robert Burke, Professor, The George Washington University
- Dr. Jennifer Johns-Artisens, Professor, University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire
- Dr. Diane Hoagley, Emeritus Dean of the UW – Eau Claire College of Business
- Mike Schanke, Vice Convener, CHAASE and President, Oakridge Gardens

METHODOLOGY
- This project will approach multiple stakeholders with a variety of approaches to get feedback on challenges and opportunities facing the development of new university-based programs and the expansion of existing programs.
- This feedback and information will be shared, and the synthesis of this information will be used, to help an advisory committee advance a national plan to expand senior care administration university-based programs.
- This project will present a strategic plan on how to create a network of unified senior care programs across the nation, including a list of the goals and what is necessary to achieve each (e.g., essential resources for vibrant academic programs).
- Utilizing the results from this study, it will be possible to work with existing university programs and new programs to create unified and strong long-term care programs to address the ever increasing need of the health and aging services profession.

INITIAL CONCLUSIONS
Through research, numerous focus groups, and other outreach efforts, the sabbatical steering committee has supported the expansion of a number of ideas and issues. Highlights of these areas are below:
- The need for a major public relations campaign to address the image of the LTC administrative profession, which continues to be a serious challenge. There is not an ample number of programs and many emerging leaders are still finding this profession by chance. This next generation of leaders is motivated by elements ingrained in this profession, including making a difference (passion) in the community and enjoying the multi-tasking requirements of LTC administrative professionals.
- Investing in Administrator-in-Training practicum experiences, which is one of the strongest elements of any educational experience. Currently, this essential component is still fraught with a unique set of challenges (e.g., availability, consistency, funding).
- The right kind of partnerships are crucial for a successful university-based program, and we need to identify and share high-impact approaches and practices. This is one of the keys to success for robust senior care administration programs.
- Highlight and claim the wonderful career lattice opportunities within this profession. We have tremendous job placement and the ongoing career opportunities are an understated upside of this profession. The support for emerging leaders and thoughtful talent development strategies are important to the respective organizations and, ultimately, the profession. Capturing and sharing existing programs (e.g., mentoring initiatives) is a resource that will serve us well.
- We do not have near the number of universities nor students focusing on this profession, although there are opportunities with programs affiliated with the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE), the Association of University Programs in Health Administration (AUPHA), the Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Management Education (CAHME), and the National Association of Long Term Care Administrator Boards (NAB). First, there needs to be a conversation amongst the educational associations to have a more cooperative relationship.
- There needs to be an aspirational model developed for this professional practice for the future, and the feedback thus far is to focus less on the technical needs and more on the development of professional leadership skills. Encouraging providers and their respective associations to engage with academic accrediting bodies is a good step forward.
- Efforts are in place to advance an applied research proposal to document the profile of the profession and assess the leadership impact on care outcomes. We also intend to support the advancement of a collaborative that stays focused on the recommended project actions, bringing together stakeholders that would not routinely connect but have significant influence on the ultimate goal of expanding the number of academic programs geographically dispersed across the country.

FINAL DISSEMINATION OF PLAN
- Final development of a strategic plan with specific recommendations and action steps, which will require reaching out to other critical stakeholders, and will require the support of all of the key players involved in the effort.
- Final dissemination plans include the sharing of the initial final draft at the National Emerging Leadership Summit (NELS) in June 2017, and plans to publish in both peer-reviewed journals and provider magazines.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
- The University of Wisconsin System, the University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire, the Center for Health Administration and Aging Services Excellence (CHAASE), and the NAB Foundation have all supported the academic year sabbatical and this research project.