

WSU College of Nursing expanding online offerings to better serve all nurses

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Dr. Wendy Buenzli, of the WSU College of Nursing, is shown on a monitor as she takes part in an event with WSU Extension in Island County, Washington in October 2017.

Nurses in Washington need 45 hours of continuing education every three years to maintain their licenses, but that's not easy to achieve for nurses working in rural or

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remote locations.

That's why the Washington State University College of Nursing is working with WSU's Academic Outreach & Innovation group and WSU Extension to make [continuing education](#) more accessible to nurses everywhere.

Using a mix of online course work and traditional classes that are offered through interactive video technology, the College of Nursing "sees a real possibility to expand our reach and better serve the nursing profession," said Wendy Buenzli, Ph.D., Director of Professional Development at the college.

The College of Nursing, for example, is in the early stages of a partnership with [Kootenai Health](#) in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, to offer online continuing education for nurse leaders there. A pediatric outreach program [piloted in Grand Coulee, Washington](#) in conjunction with Sacred Heart Children's Hospital could be moved mostly online. And the College of Nursing's RN refresher program, required by the state of Washington for nurses who have let their license lapse, has been reworked and moved online in a project headed by Vicky Sattler, Ph.D., clinical coordinator of that program.

Most recently, Buenzli joined a group on Whidbey Island via interactive video to celebrate the opening of a relocated WSU Extension office that could offer new possibilities for continuing education there.

Tim Lawrence, Island County director of WSU Extension, said the nurses who staff Whidbey Island's two hospitals and many medical clinics don't have good options for fulfilling their continuing education credits. "Generally they have to leave the island" for continuing education classes, he said.

Now, the College of Nursing could link to the [Whidbey](#)

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Island Extension office to offer continuing education that requires some in-person participation, or can offer online-only courses to nurses there, Buenzli said.

Buenzli said the College of Nursing has worked closely with the university's Academic Outreach & Innovation group, which includes WSU Global Campus, to retool its continuing education program.

Said Kelly Newell, director of outreach and program development at Academic Outreach & Innovation, "I think the potential is huge, honestly. I do a lot of market research on what occupations are growing and in need of continuing education, and nursing is always at the top. This partnership is timely – it broadens the reach of what is already happening at the WSU College of Nursing."

Categorized Continuing Education

Categorized: Nursing

Tagged College of Nursing, Dr. Wendy Buenzli

Location: WSU Extension, WSU Global Campus