

Practice Transition Accreditation Program



CASE STUDY: Logan Health's Journey Through ANCC PTAP Accreditation

BACKGROUND

Logan Health is a multi-site healthcare system serving rural and frontier communities across Montana and portions of Wyoming. The system includes six hospitals, ambulatory clinics, specialty services, and rural access hospitals, supporting care delivery across geographically diverse and resource-variable environments.

The Logan Health Nurse Residency Program (NRP) is a structured 12-month transition-to-practice program designed to support new graduate nurses as they enter professional practice. The program operates three cohorts per year, with residents progressing through orientation and residency components as a cohort rather than through rolling admissions. Average cohort size is approximately 15 residents, with cohort sizes ranging from 6 to 25 based on organizational need. Logan Health first achieved ANCC Practice Transition Accreditation Program® (PTAP) accreditation in 2016 and has since sustained accreditation through three cycles, most recently earning Accreditation with Distinction in 2024/early 2025. This case study outlines the challenges encountered, strategies employed, and outcomes achieved throughout Logan Health's PTAP journey.

CHALLENGES

As a rural and multi-site health system, Logan Health faced several challenges in developing and sustaining an accredited nurse residency program.

- Limited early program infrastructure, with one program director managing residency operations without dedicated coordinators or site-level support.
- Rapid leadership transitions and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, requiring swift adaptation while maintaining accreditation standards.
- Balancing standardization across sites with the need for customization in rural access hospitals and specialty practice settings.
- Navigating PTAP standards while simultaneously building foundational processes such as gap analysis, outcome measurement, and evaluation.
- Engaging executive and clinical stakeholders by clearly articulating the return on investment (ROI) and long-term workforce value of the residency program.

Rather than pursuing rapid expansion, Logan Health adopted a deliberate, phased approach to accreditation that aligned program growth with organizational readiness.

SOLUTIONS AND STRATEGIES

Logan Health implemented a multi-pronged strategy focused on sustainability, stakeholder engagement, and continuous improvement.



Stakeholder Engagement and Leadership Support

- Identified key stakeholders across nursing leadership, executive leadership, education, and professional development.
- Built strong executive sponsorship, including consistent advocacy from the Chief Nursing Officer.
- Framed residency program value using workforce, retention, and quality-of-care perspectives.



Incremental Accreditation and Program Expansion

- 2016: Accredited 1 site with 4 practice settings.
- 2020: Maintained a limited accreditation scope to strengthen standardization and processes.
- 2024/2025: Expanded accreditation to 7 sites and 14 practice settings once foundational elements were established.



Gap Analysis and Data-Informed Planning

- Conducted structured gap analyses comparing current state to ideal state.
- Prioritized achievable improvements while developing long-term action plans for complex gaps.
- Leveraged existing data sources such as retention metrics, surveys, evaluations, and education outcomes.



Infrastructure and Governance Development

- Established defined roles for a Program Director and Program Coordinator.
- Integrated Nursing Professional Development (NPD) educators into residency support.
- Transitioned the Nurse Residency Advisory Board into an active, interdisciplinary working group focused on problem-solving and program improvement.



PTAP Resource Utilization and Site Visit Preparation

- Leveraged PTAP manuals, webinars, workshops, and learning communities.
- Implemented structured writing, review, and document management processes.
- Prepared stakeholders for site visits using concise tip sheets and targeted communication.

RESULTS

- Successfully completed three ANCC PTAP accreditation cycles, culminating in Accreditation with Distinction (2024/early 2025).
- Expanded the Nurse Residency Program from:
 - 1 site / 4 practice settings (2016) to 7 sites / 14 practice settings (2024/2025).
- Sustained a 12-month Nurse Residency Program with:
 - Three cohorts annually
 - Average cohort size of ~15 residents
 - Cohort size range of 6–25 residents.
- Implemented standardized residency processes across all accredited sites, including:
 - Orientation and onboarding structures
 - Competency validation
 - Resident and preceptor evaluation
 - Documentation and evidence management for accreditation.
- Strengthened program infrastructure through dedicated leadership and support roles:
 - 1 Program Director
 - 1 Program Coordinator
 - Active participation of NPD educators across clinical settings.
- Achieved full accreditation coverage across acute care, ambulatory clinics, women’s and children’s services, and rural access hospitals, supporting geographically dispersed nursing practice.

OUTCOMES

- Embedded the Nurse Residency Program as a strategic workforce development initiative, sustained through:
 - Leadership transitions
 - The COVID-19 pandemic
 - Ongoing system growth.
- Established routine review of program goals and outcome measures, with evaluation occurring every 2–3 months to support continuous improvement.
- Transformed the Nurse Residency Advisory Board into an active, interdisciplinary working group, enhancing:
 - Stakeholder engagement
 - Shared accountability
 - Data-informed decision-making.
- Improved organizational readiness to support new graduate nurses across:
 - 7 clinical sites
 - 14 practice settings
 - Both urban and rural environments.
- Positioned the program to demonstrate measurable workforce impact, including:
 - New graduate RN retention rate: 93%
 - Residency completion rate: 93%
- Shifted accreditation from a periodic activity to a continuous improvement framework, supporting:
 - Program sustainability
 - Standardization with flexibility
 - High-quality transition-to-practice experiences.

CONCLUSION

Logan Health's PTAP journey illustrates how a rural, multi-site health system can achieve and sustain accreditation through intentional planning, stakeholder collaboration, and incremental growth. By aligning accreditation efforts with organizational strategy and embedding continuous evaluation into daily practice, Logan Health transformed its Nurse Residency Program into a cornerstone of workforce development and nursing excellence.

This case study demonstrates that accreditation, when approached as an ongoing framework rather than a single milestone, can drive meaningful program improvement, strengthen nurse transition to practice, and support high-quality patient care across diverse clinical environments.

ANCC Practice Transition Accreditation Program® (PTAP) recognizes programs that offer high-quality nurse residency and fellowship programs that transition nurses into practice with confidence and competence.

Contact us at practicetransition@ana.org.

Practice Transition Accreditation Program

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