

Lifeline

Mentoring for New and Interim South Carolina Deans
and Directors of Nursing Education

Sponsored by the

South Carolina Council of Deans and Directors of Nursing
Education

June 2015

Purpose:

The purpose of Lifeline is to provide a forum that facilitates interchange, support, communication, and collaboration for newly appointed and interim South Carolina deans and directors of nursing.

Description:

Lifeline is sponsored by the South Carolina Council of Deans and Directors of Nursing Education (SCCDDNE). Because each member of the Council brings unique expertise in nursing education, all Council members serve as a network of team mentors. Council members believe that this team mentoring model will provide effective mentoring that meets the wide variety of needs of new and interim deans and directors. Their expertise includes, but is not limited to, curriculum development, Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) and Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) accreditation, budget, National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) preparation, policies, politics, personnel issues, and student issues.

Responsibilities of the Chair:

- Designate Council members as the mentor team.
- Send a welcome (introduction) letter to new and interim deans/directors that includes helpful information such as the date and time of the next SCCDDNE meeting, Bylaws, key contact people in the State, and information about the leadership workshops offered by ACEN and CCNE.
- Add Lifeline to the agenda for every Council meeting.
 - Invite the new member to give a brief introduction to include educational background, areas of expertise, work history and something that personalizes the introduction.
 - Have deans/directors introduce themselves and give brief updates on their programs.
 - Open the floor for new and incumbent deans/directors to ask questions/share information.

Responsibilities of the Chair-Elect:

- Collect and aggregate brief biographies on all Council members. Provide current biographies of Council members that include contact information and areas of expertise. See Sample Template below.
- Provide documents identified by Council members as essential.

Responsibilities of the Secretary:

- Work with Susan Outen to post current information on the Action Coalition website. Ask Council members to notify you in the event of a change in leadership of their programs.
- Solicit evaluation of Lifeline after one (1) year.

Guidelines for Mentors:

- Availability - Be available at SCCDDNE meetings. Provide contact information for biographies. Seek out new deans and directors, personally welcome them and offer your assistance.
- Networking - Assist the new dean or director to establish a professional network within the State and locally (if appropriate). Take the initiative to introduce colleagues and include in informal activities when possible.
- Advocacy and Support – Look for opportunities to support the new dean or director. Anticipate ways to provide support by thinking about the things you would have wanted to know when you were in the position of the person(s) you will be mentoring.
- Orientation - Be sure that the new dean or director has knowledge of (access to) important documents and resources (ACEN, CCNE, workshops).
- Dealing with Problems – Ensure that there is time on the SCCDDNE agenda for discussion. If appropriate, refer to an individual mentor. Recognize and offer your own expertise as needed. Share your experiences and what you have learned.
- Planning - Solicit input from new deans and directors regarding topic(s) for next Lifeline agenda. Ask them to identify at least three things they would like to achieve through the mentoring relationship and at least three things they would like the mentor team to provide.
- Confidentiality - Treat all dealings and discussions in confidence. Give suggestions (constructive feedback) for improvement privately.

Guidelines for Mentees:

- Introduce yourself at the first SCCDDNE meeting you attend. Share your educational background, areas of expertise, work history and something that personalizes the introduction (such as personal interests, family, hobbies) as well as your own vision, mission, or life goals.
- As soon as you are comfortable, let the mentor team know at least three things you would like to achieve through your mentoring relationship and at least three things you would like your mentor team to provide.
- Prepare your question(s) in advance of meetings. Plan to ask at least one (1) question per meeting.
- Get acquainted with individual members of your mentor team. Inquire about her/his own educational and career choices and life goals. Ask about the things that are important to your mentor, her/his professional and personal interests, family, hobbies, etc.
- Seek out a mentor at your own institution to help you navigate that system.
- Volunteer to serve on SCCDDNE task-forces, committees, or projects with mentors and offer to take on a major piece of work that will require collaboration with others.
- Attend regularly scheduled meetings with your mentor team to keep the relationship active. Do not let too much time go by without seeing them.
- Evaluate Lifeline at the end of one year.

Examples of questions to ask mentor team:

- How is the SCCDDNE organized? How are decisions made?
- What is an example of an important decision made by SCCDDNE? What impact did it have on nursing education?

- Who are the powerful and important people in nursing in the State?
- What is this group's relationship to the various groups (BON, CHE, SCNA, SCLN, etc.)?
- What are the appropriate and accepted ways to raise different kinds of concerns, issues and problems in the State? In this group?
- How does one establish an appropriate balance between professional and personal responsibilities?