

Nursing students help in pandemic fight

University of Hawaii at Manoa nursing students in the School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene are answering the healthcare community's call for help to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Students in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing and Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) programs are volunteering to assist at healthcare facilities and the Hawaii Department of Health.



The Queen's Medical Center, Kahuku Medical Center, Waimanalo Health Center, The Institute for Human Services and the Department of Health have partnered with UH Manoa Nursing in providing student volunteers who are assisting with answering phones and questions on COVID-19 and other health-related issues. Other nursing students are assisting with patient transport and with the screening of patients, employees and visitors for fevers and other medical issues.

The school is preparing students, faculty and staff for the COVID-19 response by providing training on epidemiology, immunizations and herd immunity, surveillance, screening during epidemics, outbreak investigation, epidemic response and personal and family preparedness. The free online course modules are available to all nurses and healthcare workers.

Matthew Robertson, a UH Manoa DNP candidate who is projected to graduate in 2021, is a volunteer at the Department of Health.



“I’m extremely grateful to be in a position where I can help with such a large pandemic,” said Robertson. “That’s why I’ve been going to school, to assist in situations like this.”

A significant demand is being placed on the entire nursing workforce, according to UH Manoa School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene Dean Mary G. Boland, adding, “Major hospitals have expressed interest and are looking at ways for nursing students to provide support as they prepare to care for a possible increase in COVID-19 patients.”

The students are to help while earning the clinical hours required to graduate, thanks to the school’s long standing partnerships with healthcare facilities, community health agencies, the Department of Education and the Department of Health. Non-traditional clinical experiences were created based on the agency/entity’s needs during the pandemic.

“I’ve learned a lot from UH Manoa,” said Robertson. “I’m able

to help and it just feels really good and I'm grateful to be doing what I'm doing."



Nursing students can also be hired by a hospital or care facility on a full- or part-time basis as a student nurse for compensation with faculty supervision and earn academic credit.