



NURSES GRADUATE, PROVIDE BAND-AID FOR STATE SHORTAGE

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(05/16/08) **BRIDGEPORT** - Dozens of future nurses graduated from Saint Vincent's College in Bridgeport Friday as hospitals deal with understaffing.

Hospitals say the nurses' entrance into the workforce comes at a time of serious nursing shortages in the state. They say these nurses' influx will serve only as a temporary fix.

Dr. Joanne Wolfertz, Dean at Saint Vincent's, points out the retirement of baby boomers as one factor in the shortage. She also says the age of nursing students is pushing closer to 30, losing years of practice for potential nurses.

Officials like Wolfertz believe this a bad time to be running low on personnel.

"The demand for patient care, for nursing care will be significant as we go through the next decade," says Wolfertz.

Mary Nolan, vice president of nursing at Norwalk Hospital, says the salary of educators is partially to blame for the problem.

"A new nursing faculty member probably makes mid 40s," she says. "A new graduate with an associate degree can start at a base salary of 60 or better."

According to Wolfertz, Connecticut will be 11,000 nurses short of what is needed by 2010.

For more on the nurses' graduation, go to channel 612 on your iO digital cable box and select iO Extra.

Video : <http://news12.cv.net/video/FC0516NT.wmv>