NURSING ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR THE 21\textsuperscript{ST} CENTURY

STARTING A NURSE-OPERATED BUSINESS
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Sherry F. Abernathy, PhD, MBA
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NURSING ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR THE 21ST CENTURY: STARTING A NURSE-OPERATED BUSINESS.

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to all nurses who believe in the entrepreneurial pursuit.
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Sherry F. Abernathy, PhD, MBA
Linda Thompson Adams, DrPH, RN, FAAN
Introduction

At a recent conference on Nursing Entrepreneurship, the presenters were so passionate about sharing their practice, research and service including the highs and lows of their entrepreneurial pursuits that the audience just sat in awe of the information and seemed to want to absorb every detail they could. This is when it came to me that a “how-to” book on starting up a nurse-operated business might be needed…one that included stories of others who have already started successful businesses.

The idea was shared with Dr. Linda Thompson Adams, Provost and Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs at North Carolina A&T University, and former Dean of the Oakland University, School of Nursing. Dr. Adams encouraged the writing of this book to help nurses fill a need and pursue their entrepreneurial dream.

Dr. Adams is a strong visionary who has the innate ability to nurture and grow an idea from its infancy stage, coordinating all of the pieces (including human resources, capital, infrastructure, enthusiasm and marketing), through the implementation of a successful project. She has launched numerous incubator stage projects to highly successful revenue generating ventures that have benefited the nursing profession and the community.

I, too, have always had a passion for entrepreneurship and have never been at a loss for ideas. I have started several businesses, from a staffing agency to a leadership development business. In my experience, simply having the belief that you can start a business is the first step. It is this belief that enables one to take the steps and actions necessary to begin and keep pressing forward to achieving your goal.

Sherry F. Abernathy, PhD, MBA
This book was written because many nurses enjoy the nursing profession and providing healthcare benefits to healthcare consumers, but no longer want to practice in the traditional way. These nurses want to be innovative, increase their income and have control over their time. One nurse who was interviewed said she started a business to have control over her ability to design a service that was needed in the community. How exciting to have the skills and the tools to provide nursing services based on a specific need in your community!

Being a nurse entrepreneur means not only perceiving an opportunity, but creating the infrastructure to see it through, including management, technical talent, human resources and finances.

*NURSING ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR THE 21ST CENTURY: STARTING A NURSE-OPERATED BUSINESS* is our acknowledgment to you that you can start a successful business and still do what you enjoy, utilizing your skills as a nurse to make healthcare delivery to others better through products and services.

It is our hope that this book will not only inspire, motivate, guide and support you in starting a Nurse-Operated business, but will also give you the framework to get started.

In the pages that follow you will learn to put the motivators behind why you want to be a nurse entrepreneur, the types of businesses other nurses have started, the characteristics of a nurse entrepreneur, an assessment of the entrepreneurial pursuit and six steps to starting a Nurse-Operated business. You will also find information on how to develop a business plan and a business resource guide on where to get help. The last chapter of the book includes interviews conducted with successful nurse entrepreneurs with whom you can identify.
We recommend keeping a small journal or notebook nearby while reading this book so that you can write your ideas and reflections on these topics as you determine the next step in achieving the life you would like for yourself.

Good luck on your journey!

Sherry F. Abernathy, PhD, MBA

Linda Thompson Adams, DrPH, RN, FAAN
The field of nursing is continually evolving in the way nurses are engaging in the healthcare delivery system of the 21st Century. These changes include the scopes of nursing practice, education, and the political arena.

In a 2010 report, the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Organizations (Joint Commission) said that registered nurses comprise 80% of professionals in the healthcare system. When there are changes to the healthcare system, the nurses are impacted. Conversely, with numbers this large, nurses are positioned to make the greatest contribution.

The nursing shortage has been a topic of concern for a number of years. The latest prediction is that there will be 285,000 nurses needed by 2020 (Joint Commission, 2010). This number has fluctuated as we have seen an economic downturn in this country. Nurses who were not practicing or working part-time, have returned to the profession or dramatically increased their hours, respectively. Also, many of the nurses who were eligible and ready to retire have delayed their retirement. It is anticipated that as the economy strengthens and the delay of retirements comes to an end, the shortage will be even greater.

Part of the reason for the growing nursing shortage is the increasing U.S. population of older adults. The baby boomers who were born between 1946 and 1964 are now turning age 60 at an alarming rate. The
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Joint Commission estimates that one in five Americans will be 65 years or older by 2030 (2010). These older adults will require more complex procedures and preventive healthcare measures than we are currently prepared to handle.

President Obama and his administration were able to pass healthcare reform bills in 2010 titled H. R. 3590 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and H.R. 4872 Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010 (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2011). It is estimated that these bills would grant access to 32 million adults who did not previously have healthcare. One of the items in the bills was to allocate $11 billion to support community health centers including nurse managed clinics. At the time of this writing, the bill has been repealed, but there is evidence to suggest that there will be some provision to healthcare reform that will give access to a substantially increased number of Americans who currently lack or have limited access to quality healthcare coverage.

In addition to the vast number of new healthcare recipients, the delivery of care and maintaining of records is being modified. The introduction of the electronic health record means that nurses will be required to obtain new skills. This generates a lot of excitement and a host of opportunities for those who are interested in technology. The electronic health record is an electronic version of a patient’s medical history which will enable healthcare providers to make better decisions and provide optimal healthcare (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, 2011).

At the address to the Joint Session of Congress, February 2009, President Obama stated that “Our recovery plan will invest in electronic health records and new technology that will reduce errors,
bring down costs, ensure privacy and save lives” (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, 2011). With the emphasis on better quality care of the initiative of the electronic health record, certainly nurses will be involved in shaping how this will be successful.

Technology will stay on the forefront of trends in healthcare delivery. Telemedicine is continuing to be utilized. Loyola University Health System in Chicago, for example, successfully uses the technology in its pediatric intensive care units to remotely consult off-site specialist with residents and staff to develop a plan of care (AMN Healthcare, 2011).

The 2010 Joint Commission report, in collaboration with the Institute of Medicine and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, speaks to the challenges of the nursing profession. The report, titled the “Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Initiative on the Future of Nursing at the Institute of Medicine” (February 23, 2010), was written with the premise in mind that nurses most favorably provide the highest quality and safe healthcare to patients. This report culminates with eight recommendations for the future:

1. Remove scope of practice barriers (advanced practice nurses should be able to practice to the fullest extent of their education and training)
2. Expand opportunities for nurses to lead and diffuse collaborative efforts
3. Implement nurse residency programs
4. Increase the proportion of nurses with a BSN to 80% by 2020
5. Double the number of nurses with a doctorate by 2020
6. Ensure that nurses engage in lifelong learning
7. Prepare and enable nurses to lead change to advance health
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8. Build an infrastructure for the collection and analysis of interprofessional health care workforce data

The December 2009 “Forum on the Future of Nursing: Care in the Community,” summarized by the Institute of Medicine, focused on the primary care aspect of nursing and its place in the community. Nurse managed health clinics and convenient care clinics (such as those found nationally in CVS pharmacies) were mentioned as future areas that nurses will continue to evolve at an increased capacity (Institute of Medicine, 2010).

In addition, the report addressed the nurse’s role in meeting long-term healthcare needs. The report stressed that nurses must take on leadership roles in the care of the elderly population, nursing homes need to have technology to support the health of their patients and a curriculum that specifically addresses home care issues (Institute of Medicine, 2010). Many of the current, archaic practices in nursing homes, assisted living and long term care facilities will not be able to withstand the impending demand.

As you review the trends by the leading authorities, it is evident that the future holds promise and opportunity for those who have the skills in nursing to provide quality care or a service to support quality care of patients and healthcare consumers. Deciphering what it means to become a nurse entrepreneur is the key to exploring ideas with an opportunity to pursue a business as a nurse entrepreneur.
Chapter Two
The View of Entrepreneurship

“I have an almost complete disregard of precedent, and a faith in the possibility of something better. It irritates me to be told how things have always been done. I defy the tyranny of precedent. I go for anything new that might improve the past.”
- Clara Barton

The most recent economic crisis was felt by many in the United States and around the globe. The role of the entrepreneur has been to restore the competitive advantage of the United States in its position in the global marketplace (Price, 2010). There are 26.8 million small businesses that are already operating and another 635,000 new small businesses that start every year. These small businesses are responsible for the creation of 60-80% of net new jobs annually over the last decade (Price, 2010). These numbers justify the possibilities entrepreneurship offers, including opportunities to benefit the economy and individuals establishing an enhanced livelihood.

The concept of entrepreneurship has been around for centuries. The word “entrepreneur” originated from the French verb “entreprendre” around the thirteenth century meaning “to do something” or “to undertake” (Sobel, 2008).

There are many definitions for entrepreneur that can give insight as to who is an entrepreneur and what an entrepreneur does. Sobel (2008) suggests an entrepreneur is someone who organizes, manages, and assumes the risks of a business or enterprise, is an agent of change, and is the process of discovering new ways of combining resources. Also, Price (2010) refers to an entrepreneur as someone who perceives a new idea and creates an organization to harvest the opportunity. These
definitions may be different, but do build on one another based on creating a more comprehensive definition that consists of perceiving an idea, creating, managing, and assuming the risk of an organization. The definition continues to evolve in the meaning of entrepreneurship.

Price (2010) stated, “a new definition of tomorrow for entrepreneurship would be one who is involved in the process of funding, leading, and coaching a close knit group of talented people committed to pursuing an idea, as well as providing, marshalling, and allocating the resources needed to take advantage of a limited opportunity.”

There are various types of entrepreneurs that you may want to pursue: small business, lifestyle entrepreneurs, high growth potential entrepreneurs, professional or serial entrepreneurs, corporate entrepreneurs, and social entrepreneurs. In this book, we focus on small businesses, but that does not negate advancing your small business or pursuing any of the entrepreneurial types (Price, 2010).

The excitement of entrepreneurship drives many to create business ventures without really considering all that is involved. This “act first, plan second” way of beginning start-up businesses fail shortly after starting. While it is very exciting, there is more to it than the excitement, much more.

There are many well known successful entrepreneurs who have expanded the economic pie and have contributed to the improvement of millions of lives because of their entrepreneurial pursuit (Sobel, 2008). People like Sam Walton, who started with a single store in Arkansas and in less than 30 years his business has expanded to thousands of stores and created numerous jobs for others. Others that have contributed to the economic pie are Bill Gates with Microsoft, Oprah
The View of Entrepreneurship

Winfrey with her own productions, and Henry Ford and the automobile. All of these entrepreneurs have contributed to the improvements of others’ lives through their companies and wealth for themselves. We expect to see the same in the healthcare industry. DaVita, Inc. is a Fortune 500 company and one of the leaders in providing kidney care in the United States. DaVita began with an idea to meet a need in the community and organized a business enterprise to meet the need.

In re-addressing one of the definitions of entrepreneurship as someone who organizes, manages, and assumes the risks of a business or enterprise (Sobel, 2008); it does not seem coincidental that a majority of successful nurse leaders share similar skills and characteristics. According to Dickenson-Hazard (1999), entrepreneurship comes naturally to nurses, because they use the skills everyday to assess, manage, and make decisions about the risks to someone’s well-being (Faugier, 2005). Nurses demonstrate daily the skills and abilities to help drive change as healthcare rapidly advances (Cernick, 2007). As we look at entrepreneurship opportunities in the healthcare industry, nurses are well positioned to take on a sizable part of the economic pie by starting businesses of their own.