



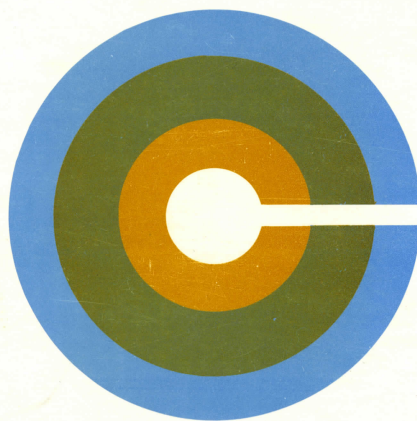
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**PROGRAM REVIEW REPORT**

**on the**

**LONG TERM CARE AIDE/HOMEMAKER CERTIFICATE PROGRAM**



**Cariboo College**

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**PROGRAM REVIEW REPORT**  
**on the**  
**LONG TERM CARE AIDE/HOMEMAKER CERTIFICATE PROGRAM**

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**OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH & EVALUATION**

**March, 1991**



## SUMMARY

Although the Long Term Care Aide/Homemaker Program has for the past 11 years steadily supplied a market demand for trained extended care and home support personnel, it has in many ways been a "cinderella" program. It has operated on a modest budget and in even more modest facilities, and has continually been over-shadowed by its larger and more glamorous cousin, Nursing (to which department it belongs). It should be emphasized, however, that LTCA/H has met the needs (and continues to do so) of clients who are drawn to nursing but who either do not possess the academic pre-requisites for that program or do not wish to commit to three years of study for a Nursing Diploma.

The Evaluation Committee has identified four major areas where improvements are needed: curriculum, facilities, communication, and admission requirements. The curriculum and program format, in particular, have become somewhat frayed around the edges over the past 11 years and are in need of systematic and thoughtful restructuring. Another urgent requirement is the provision of an appropriate instructional facility: the current one in House 9B is deplorable. Thirdly, improvement of communication, both internal and external, should be given high priority by the LTCA/H Program faculty. Admissions and promotion criteria are a fourth area in need of close attention and adjustment. Some suggestions are also made on improving the function of the Advisory Committee and refurbishing the program identity.

Substantial time and energy will be required to implement these recommendations, particularly those in the curricular area. However, the Evaluation Committee feels that it is imperative that work begin now to prepare the program for the increases and changes in marketplace demand which are already manifesting themselves.

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(January 14, 15, & 21, 1991)

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## INTRODUCTION

The Long Term Care Aide/Homemaker Certificate Program Review was initiated on July 13, 1990, with a request for data from the Divisional Dean. Discussions on review procedure and questionnaire design were held with LTCA/H faculty on August 2. Advisory Committee members and employers were mailed questionnaires on August 17; faculty surveys were delivered on August 21; former students (1987 - 1990) were mailed on August 28. Second mailings went out to employers, Advisory Committee, and faculty on September 14, and to former students on September 24. Current students (Fall, 1990 intake) were surveyed on October 22, and the October intake in Merritt was done on November 14. Telephonic prompting of former students was conducted between October 16 and 18. The cut-off date for all responses was November 14, 1990. The Committee met to analyze the data on January 14, 15, & 21, 1991.

## PROGRAM BACKGROUND

The Long Term Care Aide concept evolved as a result of the introduction of long term care facilities into our communities. As medical technology lengthened lifespans, the population of elderly and chronically disabled increased. It became unacceptable to institutionalize and neglect this vulnerable segment of our population. Promoting independence within the limits of clients' abilities rather than treating them as "sick patients" was emphasized. Past practice had been to simply hire employees for this kind of work "off the street"; now the skills required for such a job are equated with those of a Practical Nurse, but without an acute-care hospital focus.

Long Term Care Aide was first offered in Kamloops in 1980 as a 15 week program. As a result of community input identifying the need for the more "homemaker" emphasis, a second program evolved focusing on the skills required to provide care in a home setting. A melding of the two streams produced the now familiar Long Term Care Aide/Homemaker Certificate Program.

Initially, the program had two intakes a year of 20 students each. In 1983, the intake was increased to 24 students. In 1985, as a result of vocational instructional workload's being set at 210 days, the program was reduced to 14 weeks and a third intake added.

In 1988, as a result of LTCA/H Advisory Committee recommendations, the program was lengthened to 16 weeks and a four-week advanced course entitled "Support for the Mentally Fragile Long Term Care Client" was introduced. However, this arrangement failed to attract sufficient enrolments because working LTCA/H's could not afford four weeks' unpaid leave. Accordingly, in September, 1990, the program was lengthened to 18 weeks to ensure that students receive background knowledge and skills in dealing with the special needs of the mentally fragile. This necessitated a reduction from three to two intakes per year.

## ADMISSION DATA AND PERFORMANCE STATISTICS

### Admissions Requirements:

#### a) Educational Requirements:

Grade 10 minimum, or Mature Student Status.

Prospective students should be aware that educational background beyond that listed will help to ensure greater success in the program. Students must have working knowledge and skills in oral and written English.

#### b) General Requirements:

1. Successful medical;
2. Immunization schedule;
3. Counselling session;
4. Must attend a tour of a long term care or an extended care facility.

Students should be physically strong and in good health with no back problems. Prospective long term care aide/homemakers should be genuinely caring towards and interested in the elderly and handicapped and be willing to work with them and their families to encourage their independence.

Flexibility, maturity and a sense of humour is very desirable. The prospective student is advised to volunteer in a long term care or extended care facility and talk to a homemaker before registering in the program.

Effective September, 1991:

- a) "Grade 10 or mature student status" will be replaced by "Successful completion of CAT 17, Level 10, comprising:

- #1 Reading Vocabulary
- #2 Reading Comprehension
- #3 Spelling
- #4 Language Mechanics
- #5 Language Expression
- #8 Reference Skills

and the following requirement will be added:

- b) CPR Level "A" (Heartsaver) Certificate.

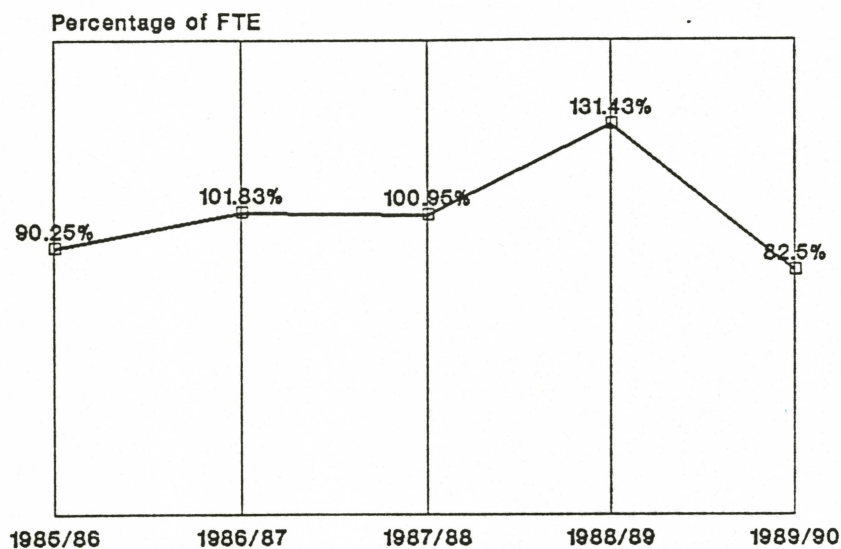
### Program Utilization Rates over past five years:

Program capacity is 24 students per bi-annual intake in Kamloops and 12-18 students in Merritt and outlying areas (average 16 per intake). Utilization rates are as follows:



Year	Funded FTE	Actual FTE	Utilization Rate
1990/91	28	34.0	121.42%
1989/90	28	23.1	82.50%
1988/89	21	27.6	131.43%
1987/88	21	21.2	100.95%
1986/87	21.8	22.2	101.83%
1985/86	23.6	21.3	90.25%

### Long Term Care/Aide Program Utilization Rates



### List of Outlying Area LTCA/H Programs (1987-90)

1. Merritt Feb. 19, 1990 - June 22, 1990
2. 100 Mile House Nov. 27, 1990 - March 30, 1990
3. Barriere Sept. 25, 1989 - June 29, 1990
4. Lillooet Jan. 9, 1989 - April 28, 1989
5. Williams Lake Oct. 3, 1988 - Jan. 27, 1989
6. Merritt Jan. 11, 1988 - June 3, 1988

### Gender Ratio:

The gender ratio for the period September, 1987 to May, 1990, was 14 males to 209 females or approximately one male per 16 females. This ratio is somewhat lower than the B.C. ratio, which indicates a 5:1 occupational ratio in favour of females.



### Grade Distribution:

Grade distributions in LTCA/H 150, 151, 155, and 159 for the period September, 1987 to May, 1990 are illustrated on the charts on the following pages. Percentage attrition rates for the same period are also illustrated. Attrition has been under 15% over the past three years.

### Completion Rates (three year period--1/9/87 to 31/5/90):

<u>Year</u>	<u>Enrolment</u>	<u>Completion</u>	<u>% Completion</u>	<u>Attrition</u>	<u>% Attrition</u>
87/88	64	55	86%	9	14%
88/89	105	91	87%	14	13%
89/90	91	80	88%	11	12%
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>260</u>	<u>226</u>	<u>87%</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>13%</u>

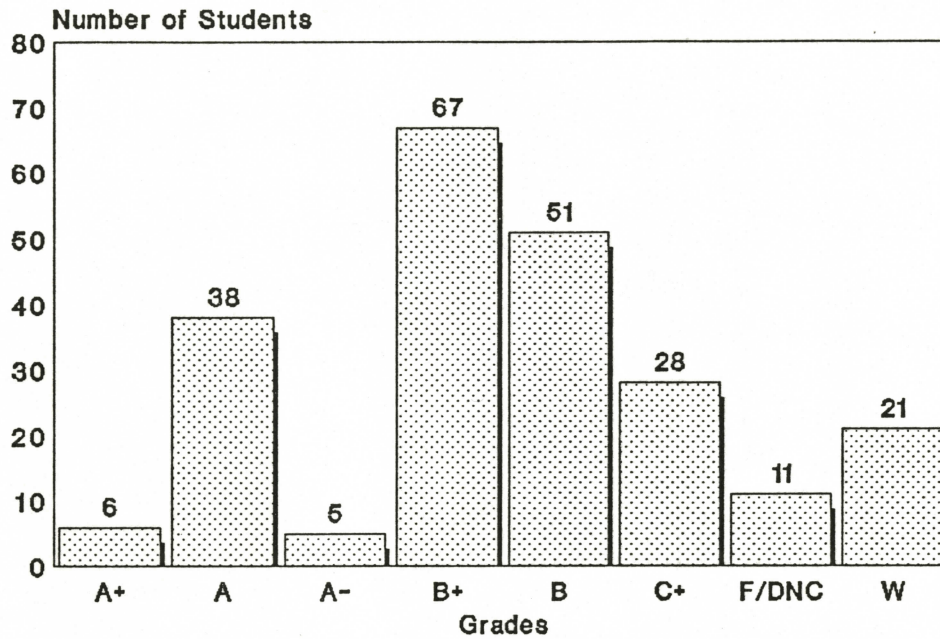
### Enrolments/Graduates by Program Location:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Enrolled</u>	<u>Completed</u>	<u>% Completed</u>
1987	Kamloops (R)	48	34	71%
	Barriere (U)	16	16	100%
	Alkalai Lk. (U)	10	10	100%
	<u>Sub-Total</u>	<u>74</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>81%</u>
1988	Kamloops (R)	72	63	88%
	Merritt (U)	32	27	84%
	<u>Sub-Total</u>	<u>104</u>	<u>90</u>	<u>87%</u>
1989	Kamloops (R)	72	63	88%
	Lillooet (R)	16	16	100%
	<u>Sub-Total</u>	<u>88</u>	<u>79</u>	<u>90%</u>
1990	Kamloops (R)	24	19	79%
	Merritt (R)	16	15	94%
	100 Mile HS. (U)	12	11	92%
	Barriere (U)	15	14	93%
	<u>Sub-Total</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>59</u>	<u>88%</u>
	<u>Total</u>	<u>333</u>	<u>288</u>	<u>86%</u>

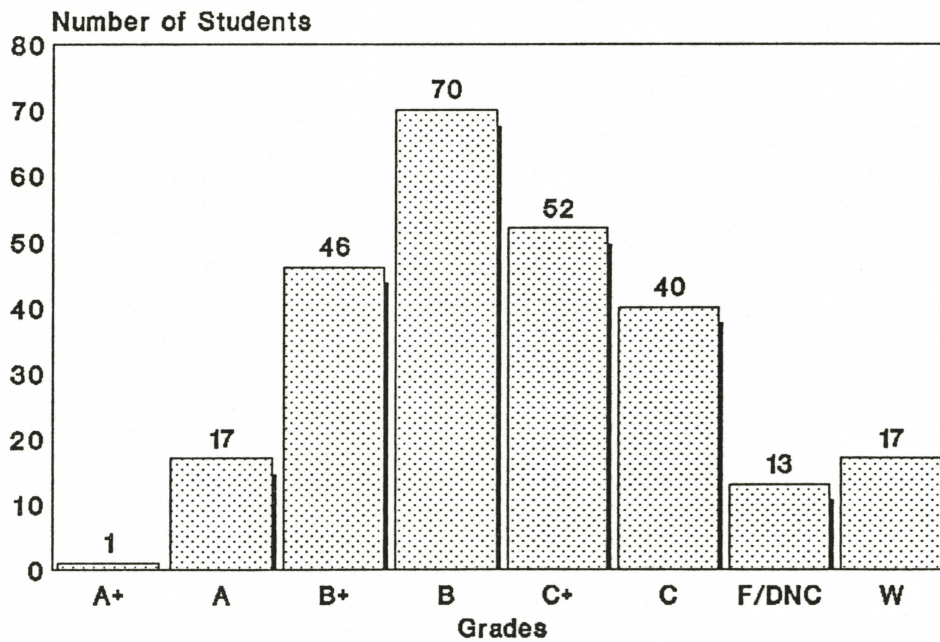
R = Regular LTCA/H program

U = Upgrading program

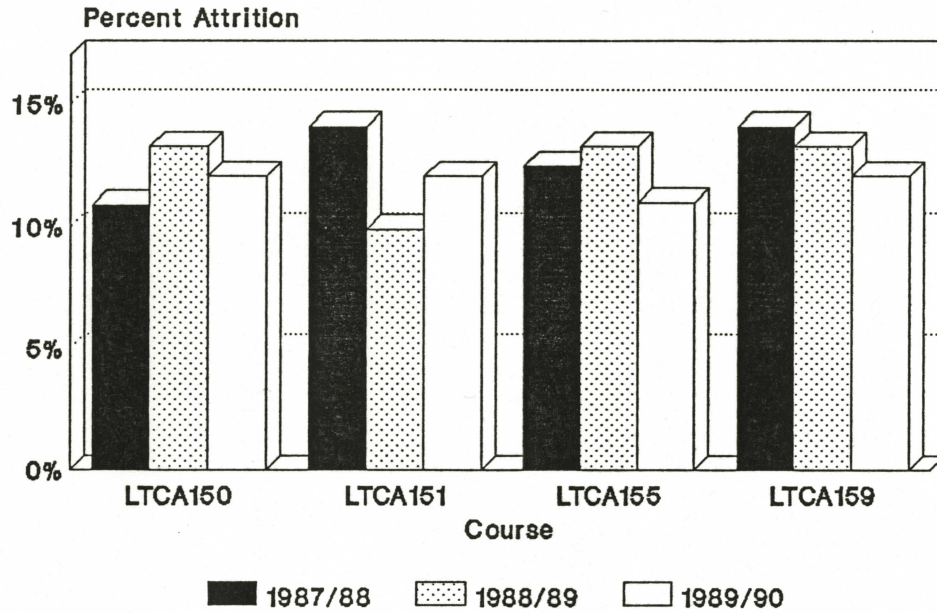
**LTCA 150 COURSE GRADES DISTRIBUTION**  
**September 1987 -- May 1990**



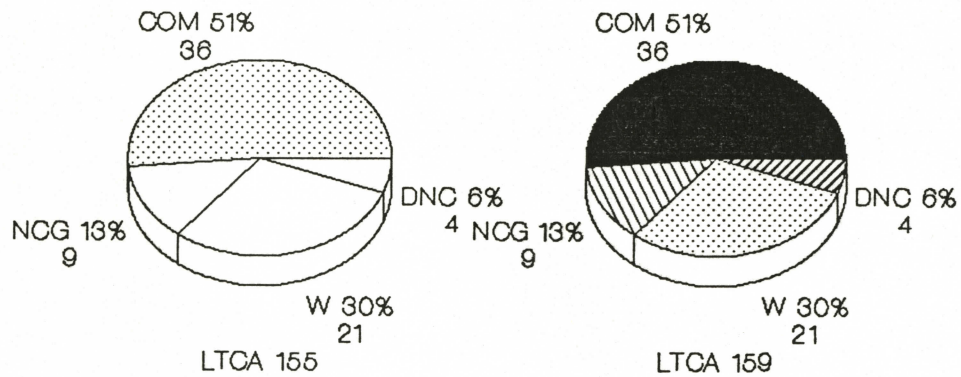
**LTCA 151 COURSE GRADES DISTRIBUTION**  
**September 1987 -- May 1990**



# **LTCA COURSE ATTRITION RATES** **September 1987 to May 1990**



# **LTCA COURSE GRADES DISTRIBUTION** **September 1987 -- May 1990**





## DISCUSSION OF QUESTIONNAIRES

### Advisory Committee Survey:

All 15 Advisory Committee members responded to the questionnaire for a 100% return rate.

### Employer Survey:

All nine employers surveyed responded for a 100% return rate.

### Faculty Survey:

Seven out of 11 faculty members responded to the questionnaire for a return rate of 64%. The four non-respondents were faculty who had either moved or who had been hired on a temporary basis.

### Current Student Survey:

Sixteen current students of the September, 1990, Kamloops intake of 24 were surveyed for a return rate of 67%. Nine out of 10 current students from the Merritt campus responded for a return rate of 90%.

### Former Student Survey:

Of the 224 former Long Term Care students surveyed, 88 replied for a response rate of 39%. The survey population was those students who had been enrolled in the program between September, 1987 and May, 1990.

## QUESTIONNAIRE DATA

(questionnaire item numbers in parentheses)

The following trends were detected in the questionnaire responses:

### 1. Advisory Committee:

The Advisory Committee has a positive view of its role in relation to the program. Its members feel that the committee's composition is broadly representative of both the employment and instructional fields (4,5), that it meets regularly (6), provides genuine opportunity for input from members (3), and effectively monitors the program's objectives (2), which they consider to be satisfactory and professionally valid (1).

The Advisory Committee sees the program as responsive to trends in the field (11). The committee perceives the general level of instruction in the program (18) and most of the program's basic components as being sound. Work habits and attitudes (7), team work and social skills (8) and job-related skills (1) are all adequately developed; the graduates find training-related employment quite readily (14) and are satisfactorily prepared for such employment (15).

## 2. Employers:

Nine employers, employing 120 full-time and 161 part-time graduates of the program, completed the survey. The number of respondents suggests a high degree of interest in the maintenance and extension of the quality of the program.

The employer group indicated its satisfaction with its contact with the College (9), and with its input into the training program, which is principally through the Advisory Committee (8). In their assessment of the graduates from the program, the employers clearly endorsed the level of the majority of their skills, in particular their willingness to learn, their work habits, their theoretical knowledge and their verbal and practical skills. Areas not so clearly endorsed included math and computational skills, writing and problem-solving skills, and the ability to work independently and to assume responsibility.

The employer group foresees expansion of both full-time and part-time employment opportunities in the coming year (3), and is unanimous in its willingness to continue to employ program graduates. Among the strengths employers identified that make the graduates attractive to them are the depth of their preparation, their attitude and professionalism, and their understanding of the role of the LTCA/H. Employers were not in agreement, however, that there are enough qualified people available to meet their needs.

Among the specific recommendations for the program, employers suggested a longer practicum. They also recommended training in mental health issues and in palliative cares, and suggested extension courses as a way to maintain and to expand the skills of graduates.

## 3. Faculty:

The assessment by program faculty of the courses and the sequencing of the courses in the current program reflects a fair measure of satisfaction (1-4), though comments suggest that integration of some of the self-study materials needs to be reviewed. They rate the relevance of the course objectives and course content highly, especially the development of team work, social skills, work habits and attitudes, and job-related skills (6-9), but less highly in oral and written communication (5); and they think that the program is flexible enough to reflect changes as they occur in the employment field (10).

The faculty responses express considerable confidence in the structure and delivery of individual courses, their level of difficulty and the balance of theory and practice (39-50). Satisfaction is also expressed in the overall success rate of the students in the program (25). However, the responses show significantly less confidence in the on-going resources allocated for development of curriculum (12, 13), and for running the program (20, 21). The perceived weaknesses are in funding, in facilities (especially for those programs mounted away from the Kamloops Campus) and in development time. Faculty responses also reflect concern over the opportunities for effective internal communication about the program (14, 15), again especially for the off-campus programs. There is considerable support, however, for the role played by the program's Advisory Committee, and for its relations with both faculty and with the employers (26-28).



The faculty acknowledge that there are sufficient full-time staff to maintain the current program (18), and that communication with employers and with related provincial training programs is adequately maintained (16, 17). There is less certainty about the level of support staff (29). Faculty responses also reflect concern over a number of the supplemental services provided for the programs, notably the effectiveness of the College Calendar in describing the program, and of Counselling and Admissions Services in advising students on career and course choices.

#### 4. Current Students:

##### a) Kamloops:

The 16 responses from the current group of students record a clear level of satisfaction with the general admission procedures into the program (3-8), with the exception of those pertaining to the wait list for entry. This dissatisfaction is more clearly identified in several of the written comments as a desire for a more thorough assessment of the candidates for the program. A similarly consistent level of satisfaction is expressed about the program itself and the instruction (9-14), with some reservation indicated about the overall workload (10). Several written comments make clear the students feel that the course demands they cover too much material in too short a time.

The responses revealed that the students had little knowledge or use of a range of other College services such as educational advising and career counselling (16, 17), study skills resources and learning assistance (20, 23), recreation and Student Society activities (25, 26), and computer resources (29, 30). At the same time, however, almost no dissatisfaction was expressed with any of these services by those who had used them.

Assessment of the courses that make up the program showed consistent satisfaction in almost all categories, with indications of some concern over evaluation methods (6), the quality of supplies and equipment (12) and, especially, the facilities for instruction (13). As the students had not yet embarked on the practicum portion of the program, no student assessment of that facet of the program was available.

##### b) Merritt:

The Merritt intake of October, 1990 registered ratings significantly below those of the Kamloops intake. The three most frequently cited sources of concern were the poor linkage between C.E.C. and the College (outlying programs are usually C.E.C. sponsored); the limitation of the Merritt facility; and the necessity of travelling to Kamloops for laboratories.

#### 5. Former Students:

Out of the 88 former students who completed the survey, the majority took the program in 1988 and 1989 (3). The two motives graduates most frequently cited for enrolling in the program were to qualify for employment and to increase their chances of getting a job (4). Significantly, 70% of respondents indicated that the program had met their main objective (5).



Very nearly 100% of the responding group are employed, with slightly more in part-time than in full-time jobs (6). They confirmed overwhelmingly that verbal and written communication skills are important factors in their present jobs (8, 10), and that the program provided them with the opportunities to develop these skills. However, the opportunity for development of written skills was less widely endorsed (11).

In gauging the relationship between their program and their qualifying for, getting and actually performing their jobs, graduates indicated a high degree of relevance between their training and their employment (12). Fewer than 10% perceived no relationship (12). In their written remarks, former students made recommendations in several areas: that the currency and relevance of some of the study materials (both text and video) be examined; that there be more consistency between study materials and test questions; that the quality of the physical facilities be improved; that the practicum be more varied and that the nature of the homemaking practicum be altered; and that more attention be paid to writing skills. The need to tighten up entrance criteria was also frequently cited.

**TABULAR SUMMARY OF QUESTIONNAIRE DATA**

**(Long Term Care Aide/Homemaker Certificate)**

The categories and quantities of responses are tabled below:

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<b>Recipient</b>	<b># Sent</b>	<b># Completed and Returned</b>	<b>% Return</b>
<hr/>			
Advisory Committee	15	15	100%
Employers	9	9	100%
Faculty	11	7	64%
Students: Current (Kamloops)	24	16	67%
Current (Merritt)	10	9	90%
Former	224	88	39%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>49%</b>

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Former Students

Returned by Post Office (all years): 31

Former Students Non-Respondents: 105

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As At November 15, 1990

Former Student Responses by Campus:

<b><u>Campus</u></b>	<b><u># Sent</u></b>	<b><u># Returned</u></b>	<b><u>% Return by Campus</u></b>	<b><u>% of Total Response</u></b>
Kamloops	146	61	42%	69%
Merritt	37	11	30%	13%
Lillooet	16	6	37.5%	7%
100 Mile House	9	3	33%	3%
Williams Lk.	2	1	50%	1%
Barriere/ Clearwater	14	6	43%	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>224</u></b>	<b><u>88</u></b>	<b><u>39%</u></b>	<b><u>100%</u></b>

## EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS

### Types of Employment:

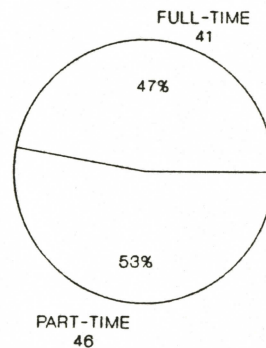
Long Term Care Aides/Homemakers, also known as nursing attendants, care for patients in nursing homes, extended care facilities, mental health facilities, rehabilitation centres and some hospital divisions. Duties would include making beds, feeding, bathing and dressing patients, and transporting patients by wheelchair or stretcher. This occupation requires many hours of standing and assisting patients in their mobility. Most hospital schedules include shift work, including night, weekends, and holidays. If they choose to work as Homemakers, they will generally be employed by a Home Support Agency.

### Employment Rates:

All jobs in care facilities require a period of on-call employment before full-time status is achieved. This may be anywhere from one day to several months. Facility positions are all unionized. Homemaker agencies generally always have positions available, with some agencies now unionized. An increasing number of students from outside the Cariboo catchment area are attending class here and returning to their own community after graduation.

Of the 88 responding former students, 41 (46.6%) report being employed full-time and 46 (52.3%) report being employed part-time (2 non-respondents).

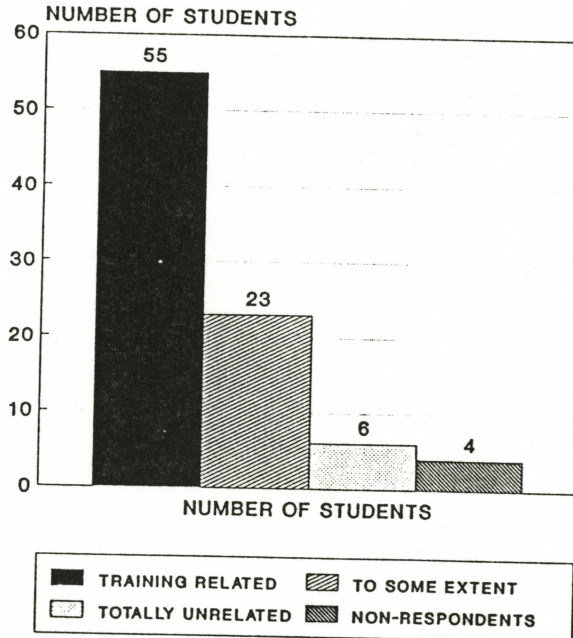
## EMPLOYMENT STATUS



Fifty-five (62.5%) respondents indicated that their job was training-related, 23 (26%) indicated that it was to some extent related and 6 (7%) indicated that they were working in areas not related to their training (non-respondents: 4 or 7.5%).



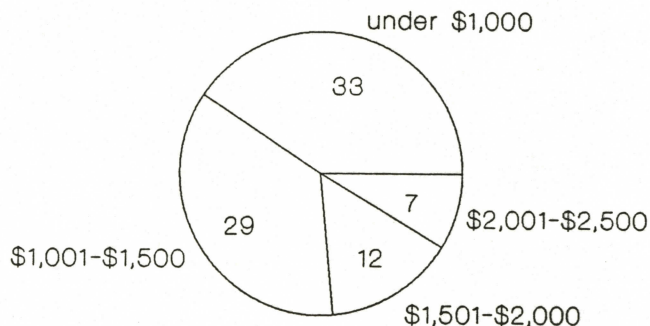
# RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRAINING & JOB



## Current Salaries:

According to Job Futures (British Columbia) An Occupational Outlook to 1995, current (1989) salaries for LPN's range from \$6.00 to \$11.00 per hour, with union rates at \$11.30 to \$13.60 per hour and nursing attendants earning \$4.50 to \$9.00 and \$9.40 to \$11.00 per hour respectively. In Kamloops, institutionally employed LTCA's are members of the Hospital's Employee Union and receive \$12.52 per hour. For Homemakers, the starting wage is \$9.00 per hour.

Of the 88 former LTCA/Homemaker students, 33 reported earnings below \$1,000.00, 29 earnings from \$1,000.00 to \$1,500.00, twelve \$1,501.00 to \$2,000.00 and seven \$2,001.00 to \$2,500.00. The mode response was less \$1,000.00; a rough average would be \$1,308.00 per month.



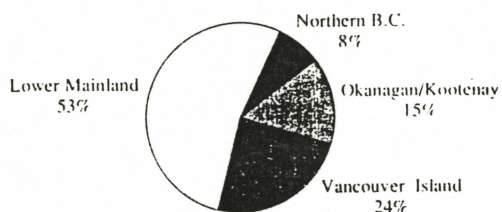
A factor which has bearing on this average is the large number of former students who are working part-time as opposed to full-time.

### Job Opportunities Projection:

Nursing Attendants and Homemakers represent a fairly large occupational group in B.C., with combined numbers of employed expected to reach approximately 12,000 by 1995. New openings are estimated at 1,620 replacements opportunities at over 2,000 in the next five years. Following the historical trend, a high proportion of these positions will be part-time. Factors that could have a negative impact on job growth include technology, which continues to make standard nursing care more complex, and the current practice in B.C. hospitals of decreasing LPN's in favor of registered nursing positions. On the other hand, the increasing need for geriatric care will stimulate long term demand.

### **B.C. employment trends and projections:**

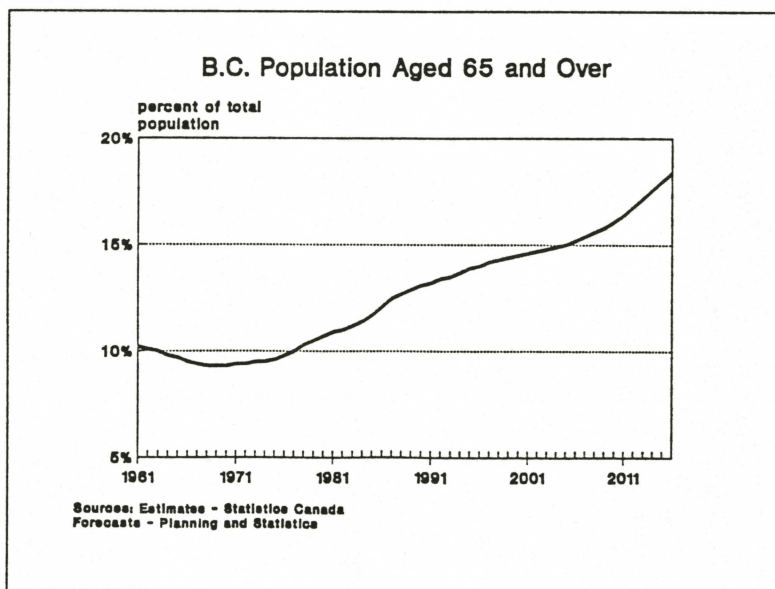
Employment by Region



1981	1987	1995
11,710	10,430	12,050

Annual growth 1987 - 1995: 1.8%

That is the short-term projection: the elderly population is growing slowly, for now. However, after the year 2011, it will experience a surge as the baby-boom generation reaches retirement age. As a result, the need for services and skills associated with the care of the elderly will increase, particularly after 2011.



**Further Education Opportunities:**

If a graduate of the LTCA/H Program desires further education after graduation, he/she must begin a new program such as Practical Nursing or Registered Nurse. For most graduates, this involves prior academic upgrading. For those who do not wish to take this route, several continuing education courses relevant to the LTCA/H occupation are available through extension services, but these are non-credit.



### STRENGTHS OF THE PROGRAM

The following strengths may be identified in the Long Term Care Aide/  
Homemaker Certificate Program:

1. A major strength with the program is its utilization of community resources. Without the co-operation of the long-term care facilities and private agencies in the College Region, the LTCA/H practica would be impossible, and the program thereby greatly diminished.
2. The LTCA/H Advisory Committee provides vital and energetic support to the program with its continual concern about curriculum relevancy and graduate competencies.
3. The basic skills taught in the program continue to meet facility employers' needs (though not to the same extent those of homemaker agencies). Employers were appreciative of the sound procedural knowledge, the dependability, and professional attitude and confidence of graduates emerging from the program.
4. The LTCA/H Program's faculty demonstrate dedication and expertise in preparing students for what must be described as a challenging career, and maintain an openness to ongoing change.
5. The LTCA/H Program faculty have acknowledged that their constituency is not just Kamloops, and have consistently attempted to meet the training needs of the College Region as a whole by mounting regular and upgrading LTCA/H programs in communities such as Alkalai Lake, Barriere/Clearwater, Lillooet, Merritt, 100 Mile House, and Williams Lake.

AREAS WHICH CAN BE IMPROVED  
(WITH RECOMMENDATIONS)

This section highlights areas of the Long Term Care Aide/Homemaker Certificate Program which the data suggest can be improved. Recommendations are prioritized, with facilities and curriculum being in the most urgent need of attention.

1. FACILITIES:

The LTCA/H Program classroom space in House 9B was the source of greatest concern in the student and faculty surveys. Instruction is conducted in a small, irregularly shaped room whose vision lines are interrupted by several pillars--a room possibly suited to small group seminar work, but absolutely unsuited to instruction of a group of 24. Except for practica, students are confined to this space for over six hours daily. The problem is exacerbated by the availability of only one, single-unit washroom facility immediately adjacent to the classroom, a situation which provides minimal privacy for users. The Committee accordingly recommends:

- a) that the V.P. Instruction, the Dean, Sciences and Health Sciences, and the Chairperson, Nursing, allocate classroom space appropriate to the needs of a class of 24 students whose program runs to six hours a day.

Several solutions may be suggested here:

- i) the provision of LTCA/H classroom space in one of the new wings of the Science Building;
  - ii) the utilization of facilities due to be vacated Fall, 1991, when the ECED Program is transferred to the new Arts/ Education Building.
  - iii) the allocation of currently under-utilized space in House 10;
  - iv) the provision of a trailer similar to that next to House 10 used by Education students;
- b) that the Chairperson, Nursing, schedule the LTCA/H class more frequently in the Nursing Lab in the Science Building to facilitate more hands-on experience in practical aspects of the program such as transferring clients in and out of bed;
- c) that the LTCA/H Co-ordinator acquire an up-to-date wheelchair for laboratory work and request that equipment in the Nursing Lab, such as the beds, be kept in good repair.



## 2. CURRICULUM:

The Committee identified several concerns of a broadly curricular nature emerging from the questionnaire data and from interviews with faculty, former students, and employers.

### Lack of Homemaker Emphasis:

One of the most prominent of these is the current lack of emphasis on the homemaker component of the program. The Committee feels that, in view of the demographic trends towards longevity and increasing numbers of over 65's, and the concomitant government policies of de-institutionalizing long-term care and encouraging home care, the program should anticipate this new direction by adjusting its focus accordingly. In addition, several former students have complained that during homemaker practica, their assigned activities are mainly those of a cleaning lady. As a result, their perception of the homemaker role is negatively distorted, and they tend to shun this type of employment upon graduation. Therefore the Committee recommends:

- a) that the LTCA/H faculty, the Advisory Committee, and the home support agencies' executive directors collaborate in the establishment of a practicum, complete with study questions and report assignments, that more accurately reflects the homemaker aspect of the program, its theory and rationale.
- b) that, to bolster the homemaker aspect of the basic LTCA/H Program, the LTCA/H Co-ordinator urge that the Extension Services Co-ordinator, Sciences & Health Sciences, mount short-term programs in all or some of the following areas:
  1. palliative care;
  2. mental health;
  3. stress management;
  4. dementias;
  5. drug and alcohol abuse in the elderly;
  6. Alzheimer's disease.

### Adoption of a Generic Training Model:

Several former student responses and interviews with faculty revealed some problems with the sequencing and delivery of curriculum material. Principal among these was the sense of haphazardness in the sequence of topics, and a lack of meshing between theory and practice. The external representative outlined the benefits of the instructional sequence in the Community Health Program at Malaspina College. This 20 week program is divided into three phases of six, nine and five weeks. Phase 1 consists of five weeks of basic theory accompanied by units on communication and growth, and one week of

practicum. Phase 2 consists of two weeks instruction and a seven week practicum (four weeks in intermediate extended care, two in home support). Phase 3 consists of one week of instruction and a four week practicum with community agencies. The Committee thinks that this model and others are worth investigating, and recommends:

- c) that, bearing in mind current ministerial curriculum revisions, the LTCA/H faculty examine Community Health Program models at other B.C. colleges with a view to restructuring and re-sequencing the Cariboo LTCA/H program.

This would ensure, among other things, that basic theoretical material was delivered early in the program, and completed before advancement to the practicum stages.

Curriculum Revision:

Whether or not the Malaspina model is adopted, the Committee urges:

- d) that the V.P. Instruction provide release time for LTCA/H faculty to do a detailed examination of the curriculum with a view to modifying certain units--e.g. body systems--emphasizing others (see 2a), and achieving closer integration of the theoretical and practical components of the program and of the program's text, manual, and video resources;
- e) that the LTCA/H Co-ordinator rewrite the Calendar copy on the program by November, 1991, deleting artificial and misleading "course" designations, so as to reflect the revised vocational format.

In the course of discussion, it became clear to the Committee that two of the problems in instructional sequencing were the dual function of some LTCA/H personnel (one instructor also acts as Instructional Skills Workshop Co-ordinator and two others are part-time), and the vagaries of practicum scheduling. While the Committee sympathizes with the unpredictability caused by such factors, it nevertheless recommends:

- f) that, as far as possible, the LTCA/H faculty ensure that the sequence of instruction in the program is predicated on curricular logic rather than instructor convenience or availability.



In reviewing the employer questionnaire responses, the Committee detected a dissatisfaction with LTCA/H graduates' writing skills. In some facilities, employees are required to maintain charts, in others, write objective reports, and concern was expressed that, for the most part, graduates are ill-prepared for these tasks. The Committee feels that this could be rectified to some extent by increased curricular emphasis on written communication. Accordingly, the Committee recommends:

- g) that the LTCA/H faculty increase emphasis on reporting and recording skills by introducing such exercises as objective report writing and "parallel charting" so as to give students more experience with the written word.

Delivery and Testing:

The Committee noted that two fundamental units in the LTCA/H curriculum are designated as self-study modules, and questioned the efficacy of self-study delivery for students whose learning styles and educational experience do not lend themselves readily to independent learning. It accordingly recommends:

- h) that the LTCA/H faculty ensure that minimal use is made of the self-study method, and that whenever possible, students are given direct instruction in all modules.

Several former students drew attention in their questionnaire responses to the facts that some testbank items were confusing in that they had multiple answers and that some questions bore no relation to the instruction and the assigned readings. Therefore the Committee recommends:

- i) that the LTCA/H faculty scan the program testbank meticulously and eliminate those items which are ambiguous or which do not mesh with the instructional materials.

The Committee noted that the evaluation instruments for the clinical and practical components of the program were in need of improvement, and recommends:

- j) that the LTCA/H faculty review and revise the clinical and practical evaluation instruments. These need to be written in specific behavioral terms clearly indicating pass/fail criteria and promotion policy.

These last two items will require the authorization of release time by the V.P., Instruction beyond the annual three weeks currently available to LTCA/H faculty for curriculum and professional development.

### 3. ADMISSIONS:

The surveys and subsequent interviews with students, faculty and employers identified serious shortcomings in the policies governing admissions. Students unprepared academically and personally are being registered in the program. Their presence poses serious problems to the operation of the program and to themselves--their often fragile self-esteem and self-confidence are undermined by their poor performance and almost inevitable failure. Moreover, instructional time and energy are often diverted in attempts to sort out personal problems or to compensate for academic weakness.

These problems have long been recognized by LTCA/H faculty, and after several attempts, they have established successful completion of CAT 17, Level 10, and of CPR (Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation) Level "A" as program prerequisites. Although these two entrance criteria will strengthen the likelihood of a student's success, the Committee feels that a third criterion should also be implemented, one that assesses attitudinal and other components necessary in a field involving the personal care of those who may be in physically or psychologically compromised states. To this end the Committee recommends:

- a) that, as part of the admission process to the program, the LTCA/H faculty institute a mandatory personal interview in which candidates will be rated according to a Personal Readiness Assessment Instrument similar to that used by the Human Service Worker Program;

In addition, the Committee would like to see the Counselling Department provide more rigorous front-end advising of program candidates. The counsellors and academic advisors would benefit from a more complete understanding of the goals and objectives of the program, and of the nature of the work in extended care and homemaker settings. Therefore, the Committee recommends:

- b) that annually, the LTCA/H Co-ordinator arrange an informational session for counsellors and academic advisors in which LTCA/H faculty outline the goals and objectives of their program, the types of skills that are required for the job, and the kinds of jobs for which LTCA/H graduates are eligible;
- c) that the Chief Counsellor, or his delegate, attend all LTCA/H Advisory Committee meetings.



Extended care and homemaker agencies do not normally hire those under 19. The Committee therefore recommends:

- d) that the LTCA/H Co-ordinator ensure that a statement to this effect appear in the College Calendar and that students be at least 18 1/2 years of age upon entering the program so that they will have reached, or almost reached eligible employment age upon graduation.

In view of the bondable nature of long term care aide work, particularly in the homemaker area, the Committee also recommends:

- e) that the LTCA/H Co-ordinator and faculty investigate the feasibility of implementing a criminal record check on all program candidates.

#### 4. COMMUNICATION AND CO-ORDINATION:

The Committee identified several aspects of co-ordination and communication which might be improved within the program, between the program and the Nursing Department of which it is a part, and between the program and the Division of Sciences and Health Sciences. Some of these deficiencies are due to misunderstandings and lack of information from departmental and divisional levels, and some are due to lack of co-ordinated effort among program faculty.

The data from faculty and former students in outlying communities such as Merritt and Lillooet suggested that, while this by no means pertains in all cases, programs offered in these areas are on the whole more likely to experience poor quality instruction, lack of instructor support and guidance, unavailability of equipment (such as V.C.R.'s), and facility deficiencies than those offered in Kamloops. The creative application of release time would allow the LTCA/H Co-ordinator to address some of these problems. The Committee accordingly recommends:

- a) that the LTCA/H Co-ordinator ensure that her 25% release time is used for administrative purposes.

Even in the Kamloops area, the LTCA/H instructors are stretched to the limit during practica periods, when daily evaluation is required of students dispersed to several practicum centres. The Committee recommends:

- b) that the LTCA/H Co-ordinator indent for part-time instructional support during program practica, when the 1.5 regular full-time faculty are overly extended and especially in need of support.



Information flow between the LTCA/H program and its respective department and division could also be improved. The Committee noted that, generally, the LTCA/H program has a very low profile within the department and division. Indicators of this are the misunderstanding over the availability of co-ordinator release time, the non-provision of monthly budget reports, and the re-allocation of funded LTCA/H FTE without explanation. The Committee feels that the creative application of release time recommended in 4a) above will help improve information flow, and further suggests:

- c) that the Chairperson, Nursing, ensure that the LTCA/H Co-ordinator receive monthly LTCA/H budget print-outs;
- d) that the Dean, Sciences and Health Sciences, and the Chairperson, Nursing, ensure that LTCA/H Co-ordinator is informed when funded FTE's are transferred elsewhere from her program.

Several former students complained about variations in response among LTCA/H faculty on program information and test answers. Part of the problem may be lack of time to discuss these issues collegially and reach a consensus on them. Also, those part-time instructors hitherto diffident about participating in program improvement activities may feel that they have little to contribute; in the Committee's view, however, their contribution is as crucial to the program's well-being as is that of full-time faculty. The Committee accordingly recommends:

- e) that the LTCA/H Co-ordinator schedule monthly meetings of LTCA/H faculty to address issues of program goals and objectives, policy, curriculum, etc.;
- f) that part-time faculty be strongly encouraged to attend these meetings so as to contribute their expertise to the program's well-being.

In several of the former student questionnaire responses, the Committee identified notes of confusion and resentment at unclear or poorly articulated promotion and withdrawal policies. Accordingly, it is recommended:

- g) that the LTCA/H faculty formulate in writing clear policy guidelines as to the criteria that must be satisfied for promotion from one segment of the program to the next (the pass grade in vocational programs is currently a "C" or 70%), and equally clear guidelines on the withdrawal procedures that will apply if these criteria are not met. These should be made available to students at the beginning of each program.

5. PROGRAM IDENTITY:

In light of the shift towards home health care and the governmental policy of prolonged community integration of the elderly, the Committee feels that the "Long Term Care Aide" designation of the program will become increasingly inappropriate in the next decade, and recommends:

- a) that LTCA/H program faculty examine alternative program names such as "Community Health Care Worker" or "Home Health Worker";

As strategic thinking in the M.A.E.T.T. is that such programs as Long Term Care Aide/Homemaker should eventually be shifted under the umbrella of Community Services, the Committee recommends:

- b) that the LTCA/H program faculty re-examine the program's current alignment in the College structure with Health Sciences and consider the possibility of re-alignment with the Human Services Department.

6. ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

Although the LTCA/H Advisory Committee, in its own perception and that of the faculty, functions successfully, the Evaluation Committee feels that the following recommendations will improve the Advisory Committee's effectiveness:

- a) that the LTCA/H Co-ordinator nominate to the President a recent LTCA/H graduate for appointment to the Advisory Committee;
- b) that the LTCA/H Co-ordinator ensure that the orientation of new Advisory Committee members be done on an individual basis, rather than in the course of plenary committee meetings;
- c) that the LTCA/H Co-ordinator include a tour of program and College facilities on the next Advisory Committee agenda;
- d) that the LTCA/H Co-ordinator ensure that in-depth examination of curriculum units become a regular feature of future Advisory Committee meetings so as to familiarize members with the elements of the curriculum and determine whether or not they meet the needs of employers and the community;
- c) that the LTCA/H Co-ordinator provide Advisory Committee members with copies of the LTCA/Homemaker manual and text.



## APPENDIX A

### METHODOLOGY

Data were gathered in the following ways:

- 1) Standard questionnaires were administered to LTCA/H former students, advisory committee members, employers, faculty, and current students. All data were processed with an SPSSX software program to achieve mean, median, and standard deviation responses. Verbal comments for each group were recorded separately and anonymously.
- 2) "Descriptive Data" on the Long Term Care Aide/Homemaker Certificate Program's history, description, objectives, budget, etc., were solicited from Judy Wilbee and Maria MacIntosh, Long Term Care Aide/Homemaker instructors, via the standard "Data Required from Dean/Chairperson/Program Co-ordinator" form, along with course outlines.
- 3) Statistical data on annual headcounts, attrition and completion rates, utilization rates, and grade distribution were provided by the Office of Institutional Research.
- 4) Several discussions were conducted with Colin James, Acting Dean, Sciences/Health Sciences, Judy Wilbee and Maria MacIntosh on questionnaire design and the program review process.
- 5) The Program Evaluation Committee interviewed the following people associated with the program:

Gail Cameron, Executive Director, Kamloops Home Support Services Assoc., & Advisory Committee member

Lori DeFrias, LTCA/H graduate

Debbie Gurk, LTCA/H graduate

Florence Gurney, Administrator, High Country Home Care & Advisory Committee member

Joan Frazier, Part-time Instructor

Wilma Peltier, Part-time Instructor



APPENDIX A

METHODS

Data were gathered in the following ways:

Standard questionnaires were administered to LTCA/H former students, advisory committee members, employers, faculty, and current students. All data were processed with an SPSSX software program to achieve cross, test, and standard deviation responses. Verbal comments for each group were recorded separately and anonymously.

"Descriptive Data" on the Long Term Care Aide/Homeskeeper Certification Program's history, description, objectives, budget, etc., were solicited from Judy Wilkes and Maria MacIntosh, Long Term Care Aide/Homeskeeper instructors, via the standard "Data Request Form" from Dean/Chairperson/Program Coordinator, along with course outlines.

Statistical data on annual headcounts, attrition and completion rates, utilization rates, and grade distribution were provided by the Office of Institutional Research.

Several discussions were conducted with Colin James, Acting Dean, Science/Health Sciences, Judy Wilkes and Maria MacIntosh on questionnaire design and the program review process.

The Program Evaluation Committee interviewed the following people associated with the program:

Calli Cameron, Executive Director, Kinship Home Support Services  
Assoc. & Advisory Committee member

Lord De'Vera, LTCA/H graduate

Daphne Gork, LTCA/H graduate

Therence Gurney, Adjunct Instructor, High Growth Home Care & Advisory Committee member

Joan Frazier, Part-time Instructor

Willa Peister, Part-time Instructor

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