

Hope After Loss Board Internship Program for Nursing Students

Internship Program Overview

The Hope After Loss Board Internship Program is designed to provide graduate nursing students with valuable boardroom experience and an opportunity to enhance their care of families facing perinatal loss. Interns will learn the essentials of governing a non-profit organization (e.g., monitoring and strengthening program services, ensuring effective planning and financial resources, supporting and evaluating staff).

Nurses are essential partners on our path to improving perinatal loss care. HAL Board service is a way for graduate nursing students to grow professionally and personally in this area. Serving on a board is an extension of nursing leadership and aligns with many of the strengths inherent in the nursing discipline (teamwork, critical thinking, strategic planning, and quality improvement).

“Board service is a powerful way for nurses to leverage their knowledge, skills, and experience to shape strategies and policies to bring about much needed change in a way that serves patients, families, populations, and communities.” ([Nurses on Boards Coalition](#))

However, nurses historically are underrepresented in boardrooms. So, Hope After Loss designed the intern program to help nursing students learn about board service and to encourage them to pursue board positions upon graduation.

The internship lasts approximately 1 year, although other lengths of service may be possible if desired. Interns will be expected to attend bi-monthly Board meetings and contribute to our Standards of Care Committee, which may require attending additional meetings throughout the year. This committee is dedicated to developing and disseminating parent-informed and evidence-based standards of perinatal loss care. Interns may propose a specific project within this committee or join ventures dedicated to curriculum development, research, quality improvement, and dissemination. Interns may also join other committees if desired (e.g., Finance, Governance, Events, etc.). However, we understand the significant commitments nursing students have to their academic and clinical training, so we designed the program to be flexible. Interns will be paired with a Board Mentor to help them develop internship goals and expectations that fit their needs. Abigail Wilpers, PhD, WHNP-BC, is our current Board Mentor. Abigail is an advanced practice nurse and researcher by training and currently works as a nurse scientist in the National Clinician Scholars Program at Yale. She has served on the HAL Board of Directors since 2018.

Serving on the HAL Board will help nursing students graduate with enriched confidence in their leadership and in the value of their voice outside the clinical setting. Board interns will also bring fresh perspectives and insights about perinatal loss care to their own clinical settings upon graduation.

“I have a clear understanding of how the HAL Board of Directors is structured and I learned when and how voting works to make things happen and get things done! I also learned the concrete ways in which HAL supports families (e.g., providing funeral funds and support groups). I would absolutely recommend this internship to other nursing students. I feel strongly that there should be more nurses on

boards and in leadership positions. This experience encouraged me to pursue board opportunities in the future. I will definitely be on a board someday.” (2019-2020 Board Intern)

This program embraces diversity and inclusion across multiple dimensions, such as race, ethnicity, gender, age, and socioeconomic status. We also encourage applicants from diverse clinical backgrounds (e.g., midwifery, women’s health, neonatal care, family care, acute care, mental health, etc.). The program strongly encourages applications from candidates who will help us expand the perspectives and experiences we bring to our mission, thereby improving our ability to help all families experiencing perinatal loss.

Interested in becoming a Board Intern? Contact christinam@hopeafterloss.org for more information.