

# High NCLEX scores > stronger students > higher NCLEX scores & so on.



This AAS program created the perfect cycle, leading to a 100% pass rate for 2020 grads, improved reputation, & better-qualified applicants

Mohawk Valley Community College (Utica, N.Y.) saw enrollment drop 22 percent from 2011 to 2015. And while the main college's administrators were undoubtedly looking at ways to turn those numbers around, faculty in charge of the nursing program took decisive action.

Program leaders and faculty focused the next 4 years on intentional, directed efforts to improve its situation. And, with some guidance from members of its ATI Nursing Education Team, the Associate in Applied Science (AAS) program finally reached its ultimate goal: 100% first-time NCLEX-RN scores for its Spring 2020 cohort.

And, as word has spread about the program's success, so has interest from applicants who are of higher quality than in the past.

## USING 'COMPLETE' SOLUTIONS

In 2016, Mohawk Valley's nursing program refocused on the goal of ensuring its graduates were fully equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes to practice nursing with professionalism and aptitude.

Those aren't uncommon goals for nursing programs, of course. But Mohawk Valley took 4 concrete steps to achieve them.

The program:

1. Implemented supplementary admission criteria
2. Added an interview during the admissions process
3. Ensured all faculty were master-prepared
4. Became an ATI Complete Partner with access to every ATI solution and other benefits this partnership provides.

## What is the ATI Complete Partnership?

Working with a nursing program, ATI develops a blueprint, identifying the resources and solutions needed to meet student, faculty, and program goals. ATI teammates then develop a seamless integration plan and conduct Insight Reviews to create mutual accountability between our program and yours.

As an ATI Complete Partner, a nursing program receives:

- Insight reviews
- Quick, effective deployment
- Training and integration of your new resources
- Policy development
- Robust data, such as KPIs and student-usage metrics
- Faculty development

Learn more at: [ATItesting.com/educator/solutions/complete](https://ATItesting.com/educator/solutions/complete)

## AIDING THE CHALLENGES OF ADULT LEARNERS

Success can be elusive for any student. Younger ones, in particular, are easily distracted by new social opportunities and more difficult academic expectations.

Students at Mohawk Valley are no different. But, for some, the challenges are more complex.

**Sam Lilly, RN, MSN**, Senior Level Coordinator and Assistant Professor of Nursing at Mohawk Valley, says, "A large portion of our students are adult learners, with job and family obligations. Many are chasing the lifelong dream of becoming an RN, despite other job or career paths they may have chosen prior."

Administration at Mohawk Valley was eager to support these older students' passions and make it easier for them to succeed. Taking advantage of its Complete Partner status, the program's nursing faculty collaborated with ATI to redefine its end-of-program student-learning outcomes. It took a look at the best practices it was using. And it identified the specific areas where students were lacking. ATI teammates then introduced the most effective solutions for Mohawk Valley's challenges.

In reviewing these resources, administrators and educators were able to see which specific solutions could help them hit their goals most quickly.

**Melissa Copperwheat, MS, RN**, Dean of the School of Health Sciences, says, "As simple as it may seem, implementing the practice assessments that coincide with the proctored assessments has been a huge complement to student learning."

Mohawk Valley found other ATI solutions helpful, as well, especially its remediation tools.

Lilly says, "Students remediate on every assessment we administer," using either native ATI assessments or those created using the Custom Assessment Builder. The program also requires students to complete a predetermined number of templates based on their scores.

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**MS, RN**  
Dean of the School  
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of Nursing





"ATI assisted us with the integration of products to address our deficiencies," Lilly adds, noting that ATI even followed up to evaluate specific cohorts' progress.

Additionally, Lilly says the program identified ATI Capstone Comprehensive Content Review as being a significant addition to its ATI repertoire. Capstone helps students prepare for the Comprehensive Predictor Exam, and ATI tailors the solution to meet every nursing program's specific needs, integrating it as a supplement to existing pregraduation curriculum.

Copperwheat describes Capstone as "extremely beneficial," citing its ability to help students really focus on the topics that they will encounter on the NCLEX.

As mentioned, since implementing Capstone, Copperwheat says, "Our board pass rates have been positively impacted."

How positively? After enacting its changes, and including the Capstone curriculum supplement, the program's first-time licensure pass rates increased steadily from 2016: 77%, 87%, 97%, 96%, and, finally, 100% for its 2020 graduates.

"The 100% pass rate for 2020, during the challenges students faced from COVID-19, is a true reflection of not only the college's and program's efforts but the caliber of students who have entered the program," Copperwheat explains. "We are beyond proud of our success and the success of our students. It has been a team effort and has certainly been a bright spot not only for our program and our college but also for the community we serve."

### **NCLEX SUCCESS REFLECTED ON A WIDER SCALE**

The result of Mohawk Valley's efforts not only improved NCLEX pass rates but also improved the nursing program's reputation.

"No question, the NCLEX rates have been important in changing the view our program may have had in the community," Copperwheat says. She also noted a new pride in students who apply for, are accepted into, and graduate from the program. "Students feel that they are more prepared. They tend to trust the process more as opposed to questioning the why behind the assignment and course requirements."

The positive reputation is reflected in the reaction of local employers hiring Mohawk Valley grads.

**Colette Wilk, MSN, RN**, Director of Nursing for Mohawk Valley Health System in Utica, says Mohawk Valley students have done well clinically at her hospital. "As a group, they have improved in critical thinking and confidence," she says, referring to them as a "valued part of the healthcare team." They work well with others, she notes, and their clinical experiences definitely show in the work environment.

"MVCC has a strong clinical program, and we are always happy to hire their students at MVHS," Wilk adds. "They are strong nurses and valuable members of our healthcare team."

Reflecting on the success of Mohawk Valley's grads in their new careers, Lilly gives a nod to its program partner.

"ATI has been more than helpful and has gone above and beyond," he says.

