

◆ Background

- ❖ In 2015, the national turnover rate for bedside emergency department (ED) nurses was 21.1% ; the financial impact is between \$37,000 and \$58,400 to hire one nurse (Nursing Solutions, 2016).
- ❖ Increased patient acuity and volume, nurse dissatisfaction and shortages, and budgetary constraints contribute to high staff turnover, which invariably impacts patient care and outcomes (Collini, Guidroz & Perez, 2015; Johnston et al., 2016).

The recruitment of experienced ED nurses has been a challenge that is compounded by retirements, advancements in nursing careers, and transitions to less acute areas of practice. To address vacancy rates, graduate nurses (GNs) are being hired into EDs tasking nurse educators to find innovative solutions to adequately train, integrate, and retain these nurses within a high acuity environment.

◆ Purpose

High turnover and nurse vacancy rates (32.7% and 11.3%, respectively) made it necessary to hire 41 GNs over a 17-month period just to maintain adequate ED staffing.

The purpose of this initiative was to create an innovative onboarding program to assist the GNs in adapting to the ED environment; improve staff morale and satisfaction; foster an evidence-based and patient-centered culture; and ideally reverse the high turnover rate.

◆ Setting

- ❖ Urban Level III Trauma Facility
- ❖ 46-bed ED with > 85,000 annual visits



◆ Design

An interprofessional team, comprised of nurses (direct care providers, educators, and leaders), faculty from a local nursing school, and physicians partnered in implementing a quality improvement project entitled C.O.N.N.E.C.T.E.D. (acronym for Creative Onboarding of New Nurses to Eliminate Clinician Turnover in the Emergency Department).

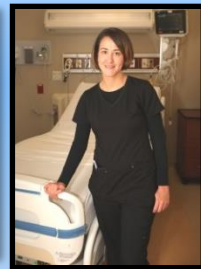
◆ Methods

Various educational pedagogies (problem-based learning, ED case studies, and simulation at the nursing school) were incorporated into the training.

- ❖ 17 weeks of 1:1 preceptor experience
- ❖ Cross-training in multiple specialties including: hemodialysis, labor & delivery, newborn nursery, respiratory therapy, and intensive care
- ❖ Didactic classes focused on additional skills (e.g., interprofessional communication, evidence-based practice, basic research methodology) to support the creation, translation and dissemination of evidence (both locally and nationally).

◆ Results

Since implementing the program, the retention rate among nurse residents has increased to 90%. These nurses function independently in all care areas, except triage, and report (both anecdotally and on nurse satisfaction scales) having a voice in planning, implementing, and evaluating patient-centered care.



◆ Implications for Nursing

The C.O.N.N.E.C.T.E.D. program provides a roadmap that other EDs can use to assist novice nurses in acculturation into an often challenging environment.

◆ References

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