The onboarding of new graduate nurses is a vital part of a successful healthcare environment. Ensuring that new graduates are effectively and successfully integrated into the work place environment requires innovative programs and engaged leaders. Practice transition programs can help new graduate nurses become familiar with new work environments and acquire necessary skills essential for particular unit areas (Africa, 2017). These programs can also help improve retention and decrease anxiety among new graduate nurses (AL-Dossary, Kitsantas, & Maddox, 2014). The moving of a practice transition program from a local project to an accredited program requires thought and focus. Making sure that a program holds the necessary standards to reflect the level needed for accreditation demonstrates enhancing professional well-being, strengthening the health within a work environment while leading a stellar initiative.

The Center for Advancing Professional Excellence Department at Midland Memorial Hospital in Midland, Texas created a practice transition program for this purpose and recently gained accreditation through the American Nurses Credentialing Center. Achieving accreditation took strong leadership and teamwork. According to Cunningham, Salomone, & Wielgus (2015), leaders directly influence team members’ execution and performance in project management. The program manager coordinated the curriculum by using didactic courses and simulation scenarios. New graduate nurses were onboarded over the course of one year. Content experts created each course and provided instruction along with the education team. All new graduate nurses took part in evidence-based projects with presentations to complete their residencies.

The program director and the program manager began reviewing the accreditation criteria early in the process. The criteria provided a great deal of direction for the program. Learning and professional development often leads to fulfillment and motivation in nursing, which in turn leads to inspiration and drive (Narayanasamy & Penney, 2014). The information learned then led to a strategic sequence for the educators to take in preparation for accreditation which was crucial because a written document was required. The team convened to develop a timeline and confirm the goals. Once assignments were made, the team began the process of writing the document and sending each section to the editor. As each piece was completed, it was sent to the program director. Since the team was still responsible for completing regular duties, all work was completed electronically.

Once the document was completed and submitted, a phone conference was convened with the accrediting body, hospital leadership, practice transition program team, select nursing staff, and select new graduate nurses. This phone call was managed to allow for the clarification and verification of the diverse components within the practice transition program. Multiple questions were asked throughout the three-hour phone call to ensure a clear picture of the program was perceived by all the participants on the phone call. Several weeks passed before the team learned that the program was accredited with distinction.
Since supportive leadership and excellent teamwork were evident, a successful practice transition program was created and accredited. Moreover, the initiative of the team to take on this challenge was evident of their drive, accountability, and ownership for creating a quality environment for patients and staff (Tye & Dent, 2017). An initiative such as this is vital to help onboard new graduate nurses. Ultimately, patients gain the most benefit because each new nurse is provided the opportunity to transition into their new environment safely and confidently.

This session will provide down-to-earth recommendations for moving a practice transition program toward national accreditation. The lessons learned by this agency along with impressions, suggestions, and views will be presented to engage and champion the benchmarks and hallmarks needed within an accredited residency program. As agencies strive for acknowledgment of the level of excellence within selected programs, accreditation is a valid reflection of the outstanding and remarkable programs instituted and directed by nurses for nurses to showcase quality and safety regarding patient care.

Title:
Successful Accreditation of a Practice Transition Program: Teamwork at Its Finest

Keywords:
Leadership, Onboarding and Teamwork

References:


**Abstract Summary:**
The onboarding of new graduate nurses is a vital part of a successful healthcare environment. The Center for Advancing Professional Excellence Department at Midland Memorial Hospital recently gained accreditation through the American Nurses Credentialing Center. The lessons learned will be presented to engage the benchmarks needed within an accredited residency program.

**Content Outline:**
I. Purpose of Program
   A. Increase in Retention, Skills, Critical Thinking

II. Process for Accreditation
   A. Development of Plan
   B. Team Assignments

III. Achieving Accreditation
   A. Document submission
   B. Phone conference

IV. Next Steps
   A. Program Improvement
   B. Re-accreditation

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Second Secondary Presenting Author

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Third Secondary Presenting Author

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Author Summary: Dr. Sanchez currently serves as the simulation lab coordinator for Midland Memorial Hospital. She graduated from the Misericordia School of Nursing in 1993. She obtained her MSN in education in 2010 and her Doctorate in Nursing in 2017. Dr.Sanchez's primary role is working with nurse
interns and new graduate nurses in easing the transition to practice gap. Dr. Sanchez was most recently published in the February issue of Nursing 2017.

Fourth Secondary Presenting Author

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**Professional Experience:** In the past five years, I have spoken at a variety of International/National Conferences such as Sigma Theta Tau International in Brisbane, Australia, NLN Summit 2002 in Anaheim, California, and 9th Annual Conference: Primary Care for the Underserved in Detroit, Michigan. Topics of presentations have ranged from healthcare literacy research, how to write and get abstracts accepted and collaborative interdisciplinary education projects. In addition to presentations, I have taught undergraduate research courses, undergraduate courses, undergraduate teaching courses, and graduate courses. I have had extensive experience converting these courses to online delivery methods. Manuscripts have resulted from each of the above presentations and other topics.

**Author Summary:** Dr. Boswell speaks at numerous conferences. She has published on healthcare literacy, online teaching, mentoring, and research. She has been an educator for more than 10 years, working at multiple levels Dr. Boswell is a strong advocate for effective faculty and peer mentoring. She is currently on the faculty at the school of nursing at Texas Tech University HSC.

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**Professional Experience:** Dr. Hall has been instrumental in supporting the Residency Program at the institution. He helped secure necessary resources for the program and has served as the director of the department.

**Author Summary:** Dr. Hall has been actively involved in the acute care setting. He champions efforts to improve patient care in multiple areas within the hospital. Dr. Hall is the leader for this agency's efforts for certification of multiple programs within the agency.