

Engaging the Nursing Workforce with Meaningful Recognition

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Problem Statement

- The nursing workforce is a pivotal partner in today's complex and changing healthcare landscape
- Nurses are struggling to maintain energy and passion needed to remain engaged in the meaningful work required to provide excellent patient care and quality outcomes
- Retention and engagement strategies remain standardized, fragmented or nonexistent

Without professional meaningful interventions, the nursing workforce will continue to feel devalued, causing detrimental impacts on the provision of patient centered care and organizational transformation.

Introduction

- A highly committed and fully engaged nursing workforce is integral to the transformation of a transactional healthcare model to a wellness model
- Despite the critical role nurses need to play, 15 of every 100 nurses are considered disengaged
- More than a million new nursing jobs are projected by 2020 due to greater demand for nurses driven by the aging U.S. population

Objective

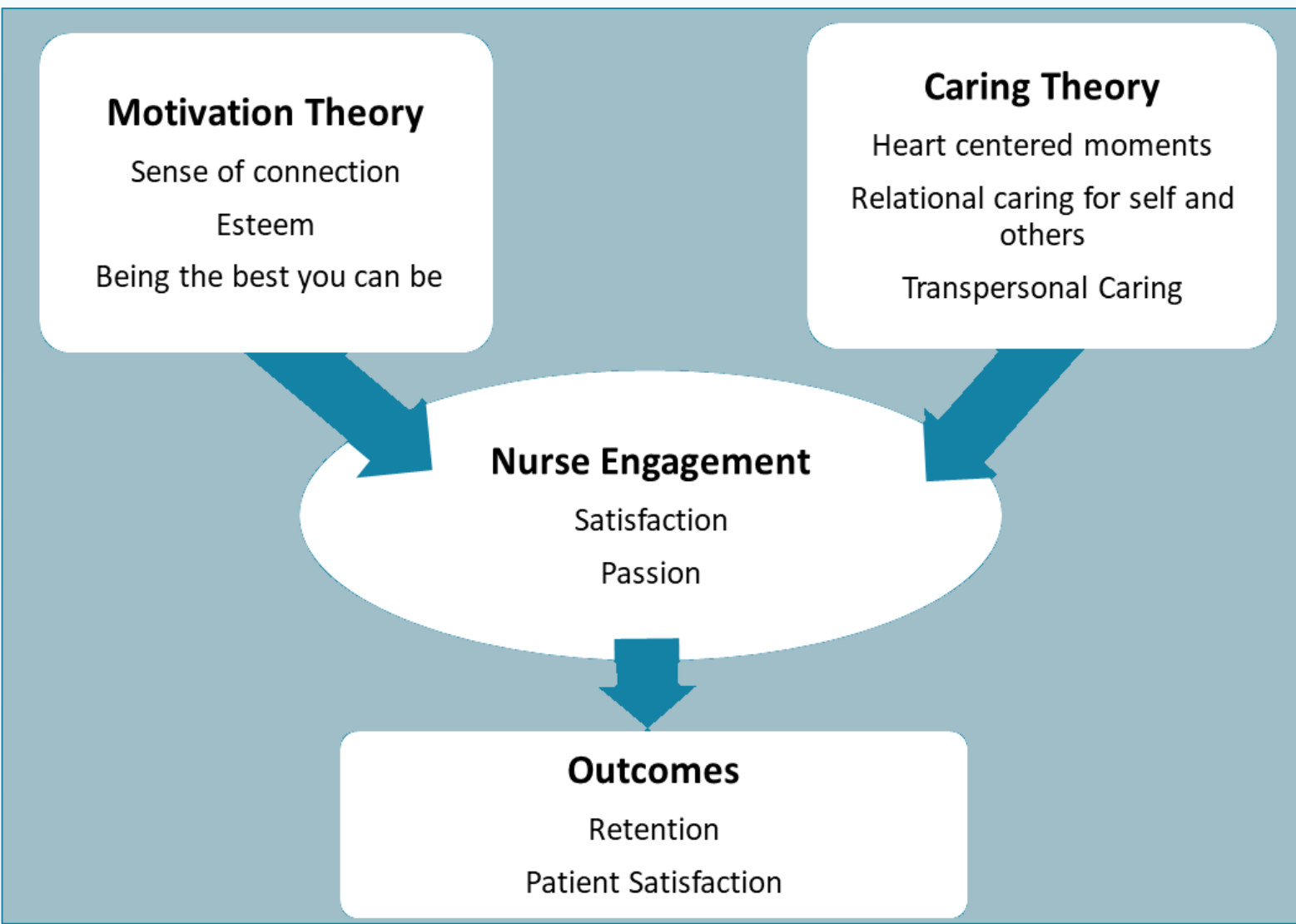
To incorporate meaningful and professional recognition into nurse leader strategies for meeting the needs of the diverse nursing workforce, thus transforming the nurse work environment to positively impact staff engagement.

PICOT

Among registered nurses on inpatient units of a community medical center, how does meaningful and motivational recognition influence retention and engagement of multigenerational staff nurses over a three-month period ?

Theoretical Framework

Engagement Motivation Theory: Synthesis of Watson's Caring Theory and Maslow's Motivational Theory



Literature Review

- The literature supports the positive impacts of a healthy work environment, and yet a concern exists in the declining perception nurses have of their work environments (Ulrich, Lavandero, Woods, & Early, 2013)
- The studies recognize the need to encourage the acceptance of differences in personality, experience and communication styles in order to encourage a healthy work environment (Doherty et al., 2013; Ulrich et al., 2014)
- Nurse Managers are key to improving quality of care by nurturing opportunities for staff to find meaning and satisfaction in their work (Pavlish & Hunt, 2012; Cronin & Becherer, 1999)
- Meaningful recognition empowers nurses to celebrate the impact their care has on patients, families, and patient outcomes (Lefton, 2012)

Intervention

- Empower, enable and actuate nurse managers to meaningfully recognize their nursing workforce
- Create a meaningful recognition toolkit for nurse managers to use to acknowledge their staffs with thank you notes for outstanding work and professional achievements
- Collect and synthesize data about the nurse workforce to define their needs and preferences in order to develop an environment favorable to an engaged workforce (AACN, 2005)

Implementation

- Educated and trained nurse managers on meaningful recognition through weekly project team meetings
- Administered a 3-part baseline survey to nurses and nurse managers
 - **Meaningful Recognition Questionnaire** (Blegen, 1992) — quantitatively measures how meaningful various methods of recognition are to nurses.
 - **The Healthy Work Environment (HWE) Assessment Tool** (AACN, 2005) — quantitatively measures nurse perception of the health of their work environment
 - **Demographic Survey** Collects demographic data about nurses, such as generational cohort and work experience levels
- Initiated nurse manager use of recognition toolkit on their staffs
- Re-administered meaningful recognition subscale of the HWE for comparison to baseline data

Implementation Survey Results

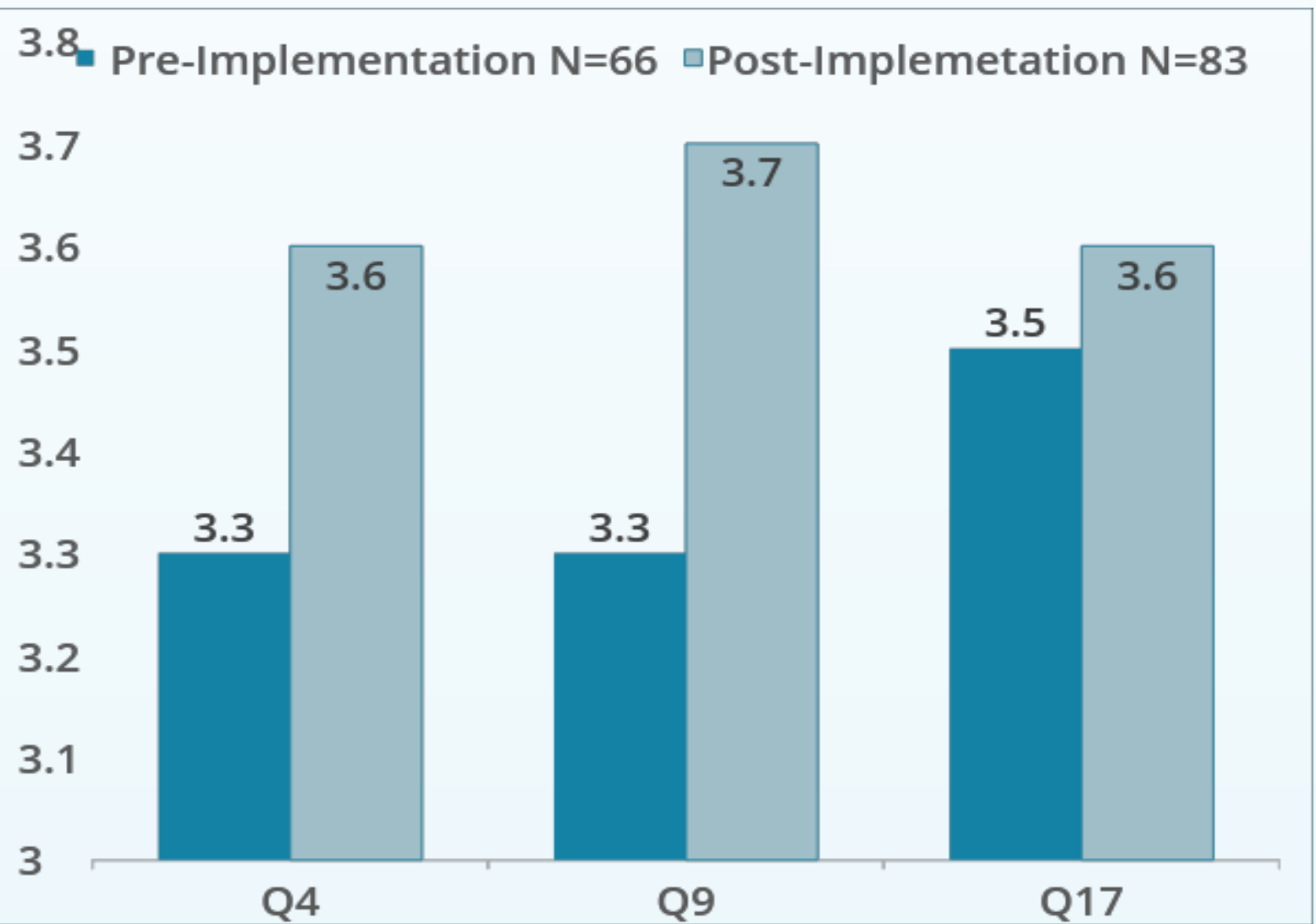
Six Factors of Recognition Behaviors

All RN's	Recognition Questionnaire	Mean N=66	BB N=22	Gen X N=18	Gen Y N=19	Gen Z N=7
F1	Opportunities for growth and development (13)	3.3	3.4	3.0	3.5	3.1
F2	Written Acknowledgement (3)	3.4	3.3	3.0	3.4	3.3
F3	Private Verbal Feedback (3)	3.8	3.7	3.7	4.0	3.8
F4	Public Acknowledgement (7)	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.6	3.3
F5	Schedule (3)	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.3
F6	Salary (1)	3.5	3.5	3.2	3.7	3.6

Scores between 1-5
Highly preferred = 4-5, Preferred = 3-3.99, Least Preferred = 1-2.99

Implementation Survey Results

Pre/Post HWE Meaningful Recognition Questions (all Registered Nurses)



Scores between 1-5 (ANCC, 2005)
1.0-2.99 = Needs Improvement, 3-3.99 = Good, 4-5 = Excellent

Evaluation

- The evaluation of this DNP project remains in the final stages of completion
- The evaluation plan is centered on determining how effective the written thank you notes were on influencing the engagement and retention of the nursing workforce
- There was a positive trend across all three questions of the HWE meaningful recognition subscale questions
- After the implementation of the thank you notes, a statistically significant positive increase was found in response to Q9 "Administrators, nurse managers, physicians, nurse, and other staff members speak up and let people know when they've done a good job" ($P=0.009$)
- Influencing workforce retention and patient satisfaction outcomes takes time. Small incremental changes are the first steps to achieving the cultural change necessary to provide excellent patient care, quality outcomes and organizational transformation