Raising the Bar: Advancing Expertise at the Bedside

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Purpose (What): To advance professionalism and expertise at the bedside the organization invested in a certification program focusing on removing identified barriers and using a peer-to-peer mentorship model to motivate, encourage, and support nurses embarking on the certification journey.

Relevance/Significance (Why): We had a certification rate of less than 10%. Certification is a common strategy within healthcare industry to increase the professionalism & clinical expertise of bedside nurses. Positive impacts of certification include increased public safety, improved patient outcomes, promotion of excellence in nursing care, & validation of specialized knowledge & competency. Perceived & actual barriers to certification can be challenging for healthcare organizations to overcome.

Strategy and Implementation (How): Education & Research Council developed toolkits, created peer-to-peer mentorship program by forming cohorts to study and sit the test together, with further support as the Nursing Professional Development Specialist registering staff for exam or issuing examination vouchers. Study materials were library at the unit level. Units started posting certification rates on huddle boards, having Wall of Honor in public areas. Certification promotion poster created featuring certified staff highlighting benefits of certification and a special message from the CNO was created and placed all over. Annually the CNO host a special celebration on Certified Nurses day and each individual staff is greeted and recognized by the CNO. There was an overwhelming response of gratitude by the participants to this form of recognition. As a result of implementing these grass-roots initiatives staff were forming their own study groups and requesting study materials for leadership.

Evaluation/Outcomes (So what): Implementing these grass-roots initiative, resulted in 20%; 25% & 50 % increase in certified nurses respectively over 4 years with a total of 16 peer-to-peer cohorts ranging from 2 to 10 participants. Overall rate increased to 39%. Pass rate ranged from 50 to 100% per cohort. Increased in certification rates also correlated to increase in advanced degrees of the nurses who were certified.

Implications for Practice (And now): Specialty certification demonstrates a professional's commitment to lifelong learning & validates competency in the delivery of high quality care. Removing barriers demonstrates an organizational commitment to nursing excellence through specialty certification of its nurses.

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Keywords: lifelong learning, mentorship and professional development

References:
• JNSD
Abstract Summary:
To advance professionalism and expertise at the bedside the organization invested in a certification program focusing on removing identified barriers and using a peer-to-peer mentorship model to motivate, encourage, and support nurses embarking on the certification journey.

Content Outline:
Introduction

• advancing professionalism and expertise at the bedside
• certification program to support nurses embarking on the certification journey.

Implementation

• study toolkits, created peer-to-peer mentorship program
• cohorts to study and sit the test together,
• cognition
• leadership support

Conclusion

• demonstrates a professional's commitment
• lifelong learning
• validates competency

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Professional Experience: ♦ Clinical excellence and emphasis on quality/continuous improvement ♦ Competency Management using multiple methods ♦ Professional Role Development ♦ Curriculum Design, Development and Evaluation ♦ Principles of Teaching and Adult Learning ♦ ANCC Provider Nurse Planner for Continuing Nursing Education ♦ Project Management ♦ Advancing EBP in healthcare ♦ LEAN and Quality Improvement in Healthcare

Author Summary: A top performing and dedicated Healthcare Leader extensive background in professional development; evidence synthesis on clinical interventions; use of QI models to develop evidence-based solutions that improve healthcare outcomes; clinical education for inter-professional
teams; and developing structure and processes that support the program. Dedicated to accomplishing organizational goals through building successful relationship and teams