Collaborative Efforts Yielding a Sharp Increase in RN-BSN Enrollment: Benefits, Challenges, and Lessons Learned

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Background/Significance: With the increasing demand for Baccalaureate prepared nurses, schools of nursing are modifying programs and using initiatives to attract applicants. For hospitals where a BSN is not required, or AD nurses are grandfathered, the incentive to complete a BSN is a challenge. A team composed of representatives from a state-run university hospital and the affiliated College of Nursing collaborated to develop strategies to increase RN-BSN enrollment among hospital nurses. A marketing event titled, Instant Decision Day was created along with additional promotional interventions. The initiatives resulted in increased hospital RN application to the affiliated College of Nursing RN-BSN program by nearly 200%, with a 165% increase in tuition revenue. However, the success came with challenges. This project will share the benefits, challenges, and lessons learned for future efforts and initiatives.

Results: For the hospital, unit managers were faced with creative strategies to accommodate staffing schedules. For the college, increased class sizes called for more course sections and the establishment of new instructors and clinical preceptors.

Discussion: The college consistently scheduled face-to-face classes one specific day during the week to assist with work schedules. Nurse managers could allow for a particular day opposed to unpredictable course schedules affecting several days during the week. Qualified hospital personnel were recruited as adjunct faculty and preceptors. Faculty posed as lead instructors and paired with newer instructors. Additional resources and training were offered by Educational Communications for Course Management Systems. Online course easily added sections however, face to face class sizes required additional physical space. Video conferencing was used for students who wished to conference in which opened room space and offered a flexible option for students.

Conclusion: University hospitals and schools of nursing choosing to utilize this model can benefit by promoting BSN enrollment and subsequently increasing the BSN workforce. The joint mission of the hospital and the college is to promote optimum health and well-being to the patients, communities, and populations they serve. Early preparation for adequate staffing, faculty, and resources are critical for retention and long-term success.

Title:
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Abstract Summary:
Collaborative efforts with one College of Nursing, University Admissions, and a state hospital yielded a 195% increase in the hospital nurse enrollment in an RN-BS program. Incentives attracting nurses to seek a bachelor's degree, and the project's benefits, challenges, and lessons learned will be shared and discussed.

Content Outline:
Introduction
A. Challenges state hospitals face to increase bachelor prepared nurses
B. MAGNET Task force collaborating with a College of Nursing and University Admission

Body
A. Main Point # 1 Instant Decision Day
1. supporting point #1 Streamline Admission Process
   1. a) Modified application process
   2. b) Admission, financial assistance, advisement
2. supporting point #2 Nursing Leadership Support
   1. a) Hospital - Tuition Assistance
   2. b) Management and Nurse Executive support
1. Main Point 2 Successful Response
2. supporting point #1
   1. a) 195% increase in hospital nurse enrollment to CON RN-BS program
   2. b) 165% increase in tuition revenue
1. Main Point #3 Addressing sharp increase in enrollment
1. supporting point #1 Hospital
   1. a) Staffing – allow for courses
   2. b) College scheduled courses one day of the week
2. supporting point #2 College
   1. a) Increase in class size – limited physical space
   2. b) Allow students to attend via video conference
3. supporting point #3 Instruction
   1. a) Increase adjunct instructors
   2. b) Support staff – IT support
   3. c) Team teaching, mentoring

Conclusion
1. A. Successful efforts supporting MAGNET initiatives
2. B. Strengthened relations between hospital and college
   1. Increased adjunct opportunities for MS or higher prepared hospital nurses
   2. Faculty invited to sit on hospital committees
3. Research opportunities

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