

# **Bridging the Practice Gap through Pre-Licensure Nurse Residency Programs**

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## **Structured Abstract**

### **LOCAL PROBLEM**

In 2016, the hospital launched a one-year nurse residency program (NRP) for new graduate nurses (NGN) using The Vizient/AACN Nurse Residency Program™. Part of the data collection for the NRP program involved administration of the Casey Fink Survey (CF). The CF captures perceived confidence and competence overall and in five specific areas: support, organizing and prioritizing, stress, communication and leadership, and professional satisfaction of the resident NGNs. The last section of the CF contains items related to the resident NGNs transition to practice and skill acquisition. The goal is to meet or exceed the moving mean/benchmark as set by the aggregate data of all Vizient participants. The initial CF surveys given at the time of hire scored below the mean on most of the listed areas. According to the CF survey, there is a lack of perceived confidence, competence, and skill acquisition from the NGNs surveyed.

### **PROJECT PURPOSE**

The purpose of the doctor of nursing practice (DNP) project was to develop a proposal for a structured pre-licensure program and a dedicated educational unit. The project encompasses a plan to present these proposals to nursing administration, which would offer two potential solutions to solve the transition to practice gap. NRPs and dedicated education units (DEU) are two solutions to enculturate new nurses before, during, and after their first year of practice. The project's goal is to help reduce high turnover rates for both PCTs and new graduate nurses (NGNs) through a pre-licensure residency program and/or a dedicated education unit. These can assist in bridging the transitional gap between finishing school and entering practice for new nurses entering the profession.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The guiding theoretical framework for the DNP project was Deuschner's transitional theory. This framework is ideal for several reasons. First, a variable of the transition shock theory is the element of surprise that causes a startling response as the NGN gains the knowledge that they may have been ill prepared for practice. The degree of adjustment to their new reality creates a huge gap in the space between academia and the practice setting. The principles of surprise and shock seen in this theory support the need for nursing transition to practice programs and interventions pre and post-

graduation. Deuschner's theory aligns with the first year of the NGN and provides a guiding framework to establish pre-licensure programs to offset the transition shock the NGN will endure during their first year of practice. Programs and ingenuities to develop and support the nurse during the stages of doing, being, and knowing support confidence and competence. The development of both of these programs are supported well by this theory.

## **RESULTS**

After presentation of the proposals, the Chief Nursing Officer, the Assistant Chief Nursing Officer, and the Vice President of Clinical Education made the choice to consider the student nurse extern program (SNE) for the upcoming fiscal year, given fiscal and human resources currently available. Administrators have chosen to table the DEU and revisit it for planning in 2020.

## **IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE**

The design of both proposed programs intends to improve new graduate nurses' confidence and competence as they transition to practice. Confidence and competence have been determined to be deficient in the facility chosen for the project. Evidence supports the implementation of a pre-licensure nurse residency program and/or a dedicated education unit to assist with improving nurse retention rates. This program will improve patient outcomes by providing more effective staffing ratios and better educational preparation for student nurses allowing them to provide safer, more competent care. Establishment of NRPs and DEU's has become foundational to new nurse graduates' successful transition and eventual retention in the field of nursing. The enthusiasm of the administration at the target facility with regards to the development of these programs emphasized their desire to assist new nurses with the transition to practice.

*Keywords:* novice, clinical competence, dedicated educational units, nurse residency programs, pre-licensure nurse residency

Team Leader: Dr. Tonya Shanahan

Team Member(s): Dr. Gretchen McDaniel

## **1. Approval of Completion of Project by DNP Project Team Leader and Team Member(s)**

Students will continue to work with their DNP Project Team Leader and Team Member(s) through the completion of the project. Components of the project completed during the spring semester as indicated on the NURG 761 DNP Project Structured Abstract and Poster Presentation guidelines. **The abstract must be reviewed and approved by the DNP Project Team Leader and Team Member(s) prior to development of the poster.**

## **2. Poster Presentation and Structured Abstract**

The culminating assignments in NURG 761 are a poster presentation and a structured abstract that will be presented in a public forum in the College of Health Sciences lobby on **May 2, 2019**. The individual DNP Project Team Leader will guide his or her respective student through the development of the structured abstract and poster presentation.

**Posters should be prepared using a 36 x 48 PowerPoint template.** On the day of the presentations, display boards will be provided for the posters. Students are responsible for setting up their posters at the designated presentation time and are expected to be available during the presentation time to discuss their project with classmates, faculty, and the general public. Also, students are expected to be available during this entire continuing education event to view their colleague's work.

Be sure to include name and credentials on the poster and it is fine to use the DNP credential on the poster. Following the student's last name, the credentials appear as the highest degree earned, followed, by RN, followed by certification. For example, a student who also has a Family Nurse Practitioner certification would be written as: DNP, RN, FNP-BC. A student who is a Certified Nurse Educator (CNE) would be written as: DNP, RN, CNE. If a student has multiples certifications, all credentials can be included. It is recommended that students do not add a date or logo in the event that the student has the opportunity to present the poster in another venue in the future.

### ***Poster Template and Printing Sources***

**Dr. Andrea Collins has prepared an audio PowerPoint entitled *Creating Effective Poster Presentations*. This presentation is available in the NURG 761 course. This PowerPoint presentation will provide guidance in how to prepare a poster presentation as well as tips on selecting a template from web-based resources and choosing a printing service. Samples of completed posters and references from the literature will be provided in this presentation.**

### ***Poster Costs***

The cost of preparing the poster is the student's responsibility. The average cost for printing and mounting a poster that meets the required specifications is approximately \$100.

All DNP Project structured abstracts will be compiled into a spiral-bound booklet for distribution on the day of the poster presentations. ***A copy of the draft of the poster presentation PowerPoint pdf file and the structured abstract in a WORD file are due no later than Monday, April 8, 2019 by 11:59 p.m. to the Canvas assignment drop box for the DNP Project Team Leader to review.*** Once the draft structured abstract and poster is reviewed and approved by the Team Leader, the final structured abstract and poster is to be submitted to the Canvas assignment drop box, by April 15, 2019. The project Team Leader, in turn, will submit the final abstract to Mrs. Becky Morgan.

### **3. NurCE Information**

The presentation of the DNP Project poster will be a professional, continuing nursing education event on May 2, 2019. As required for continuing education credit, students must submit a current curriculum vita (CV) **OR** bio sketch (form included in Canvas) and an education design form (form included in Canvas). **Note that on the education design form, students should add no more than two learning objectives, a brief outline of what is covered in the poster to meet the objective, and their name.** **Submission of these continuing education documents are due by Tuesday, April 2, 2019 and should be e-mailed by each student directly to the NurCE Coordinator, Mrs. Suzanne Scharf at [shscharf@samford.edu](mailto:shscharf@samford.edu).**

### **4. Presentation of the Poster**

Posters will be presented in the lobby of the College of Health Sciences (CHS) building, Thursday, May 2, 2019 from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. All students are expected to attend the entire poster presentation session. A schedule of the presentations will be provided by Dr. Gretchen McDaniel approximately 2 weeks prior to the event. Attendees will earn continuing education contact hours. Those who have a nursing license in Alabama should bring the Alabama Board of Nursing (ABN) continuing education card to the poster presentation for processing through the ABN electronic monitoring system. Family members and friends are welcome to attend the poster presentations.

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