

Creating Healthy Work Environments VIRTUAL 2021

A Collaborative Approach to Strengthen Nurse Educator Work Environments: An Experiment in Leadership

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Purpose:

The present nursing shortage globally and in the United States is anticipated to intensify in the near future. A lack of qualified nursing faculty is one of the major influences contributing to this shortage which effects up to 80,000 students (Snavelly, 2016). Furthermore, over 1,600 nursing faculty vacancies remain unfilled with 134 more needed to meet student demand (American Association of Colleges of Nursing, 2020). It is imperative that nursing schools recruit and retain qualified nurse educators to meet the quickly approaching need for more nurses. Unsatisfactory work environments along with workload and organizational policies contribute to nurse educator resignations and a return to clinical practice (Evans, 2018; Thies & Serratt, 2018)) and nursing education program administrators must integrate organizational structures with effective motivational strategies to retain quality faculty (Thies & Serratt, 2018). A recent change in the leadership team members at a large state university School of Nursing revealed an opportunity to modify the current structure in hopes of stemming the flood of tenured and non-tenured faculty resignations over the last five years.

Methods:

A plan was developed and implemented in the Fall 2020 semester with a focus on collaboration between each of the 12 educational options ranging from pre-licensure associate programs through a Doctor of Nursing Practice program for registered nurses with an advanced practice license. The leadership team identified a goal to remove barriers for professional development and improve productivity by eliminating the present silo effect that confines faculty to teaching in one specific program. Input from faculty guided strategic development of workload assignments that were also based on individual experiential and teaching proficiency to provide novice and expert nurse educators with optimal opportunities for advancement within the School of Nursing along with professional satisfaction.

Results:

Positive effects on retention, budget, and feelings of belonging to a unit rather than a program are expected.

Conclusion: Results will be assessed at the end of the Fall 2020 semester.

Title:

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Keywords:

faculty retention, job satisfaction and work environment

Abstract Summary:

Positive effects on faculty retention, budgets, and work environment are assessed following a comprehensive change in leadership structure focusing on collaboration and meaningful faculty recognition through workload assignment and professional development opportunities.

Late Breaking Reason:

A strategic plan by a School of Nursing leadership team was developed to improve the work environment and provide meaningful recognition for faculty. The full extent of changes cannot be measured since this transformation was recently implemented although improvements in retention, budgets, and overall satisfaction are expected.

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