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Professional Coaching: A Successful Strategy for Supporting and Developing Nurse Managers for the Future

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Acknowledgement...

- ▶ Omicron Omicron Chapter of STTI for financial support

Nurse Managers

- ▶ Middle managers
- ▶ Have 24 hour fiscal, quality, and human resource responsibilities for at least one nursing unit

Background for Our Research...

- ▶ Over the past decades the nurse manager role has expanded to include both management and leadership responsibilities
- ▶ Can lead to role overload (*McCallin & Frankson, 2010*) and result in stress and burnout (*Zwink et al., 2013*)
- ▶ Anticipated that expectations of nurse managers will continue to expand as healthcare continues to evolve (*Aiken & Harper-Harrison, 2012*)

Background for Our Research...

- ▶ Nurse managers are crucial to the success of healthcare organizations, impacting nurse satisfaction and retention, profitability, and organizational culture (*Cowden, Cummings, & Profetto-McGrath, 2011; Gray, 2012*)
- ▶ Unfortunately, studies show that nurse managers are often ill-prepared for the role, lacking professional development (*Cziraki, McKey, Peachey, Baxter, & Flaherty, 2014; Fennimore & Wolf, 2011*)
- ▶ Managers often learn “on the fly” and through a “trial by fire” approach (*Moore, Sublett, & Leahy, 2016*)

Literature Suggests...

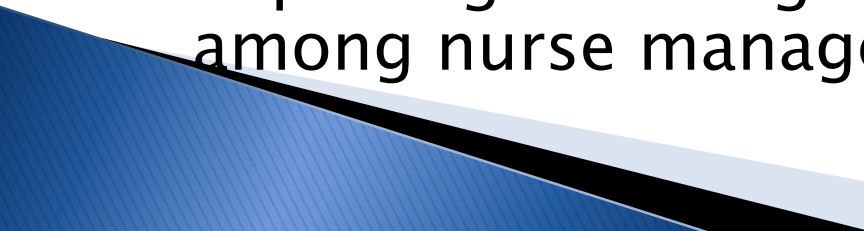
- ▶ Strategies must be designed to support the development and success of managers if they are to remain satisfied in the role and the role is to have continued sustainability for healthcare organizations in the future (*Cziraki et al., 2014*).

Coaching...A Possible Strategy

- ▶ **Professional coaching is defined as:**

“partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires clients to maximize their personal and professional potential” (*International Coach Federation, 2017*)

Coaching...A Strategy

- ▶ Professional coaches have been used for several decades in the development of health care leaders at the executive level, including nurse executives
 - ▶ Only recently have coaches begun to offer their services to nurses in middle management but, their services continue to be very limited for this group
 - ▶ Therefore, minimal research has been conducted exploring coaching and the impact of coaching among nurse managers
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Our Study

- ▶ **Purpose:** To examine the perceptions of professional coaches regarding their experiences coaching mid-level nurse managers
- ▶ **Sample:**
 - **Number:** 11 professional coaches from across the US who have coached nurse managers
 - **Ages:** 39–75 yrs of age
 - **Gender:** 10 female, 1 male
 - **Education:** 10 held Master's; 1 held Doctorate
 - **Years of experience:** 1 year to 26 years

Our Study...

▶ Methodology:

- Descriptive, qualitative study
- Used in-depth, semi-structured, audio-taped researcher-participant interviews
- Content analysis conducted on transcriptions
- Data were coded and categorized and themes determined
- Researchers tracked the # of participants represented for each category/theme and determined frequency counts (with a content analysis data can be analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively; higher frequencies may indicate a greater level of significance (*Vaismoradi, Turunen, & Bondas, 2013*))

Findings...Why Did You Choose to Coach Managers?

2 Themes:

- ▶ A staunch recognition of the indispensability of the nurse manager role (8 participants, 73%)
- ▶ A deep appreciation for the nurse managers and their role (8 participants, 73%)

Findings...How Do Nurse Managers/Manager Role Differ from Other Leaders?

- ▶ NOTE: Based on 8 participants' comments (3 coached only managers)

3 Themes:

- ▶ Overwhelming stress (5 participants, 63%)
- ▶ Expansive span of control (4 participants, 50%)
- ▶ Minimal support (4 participants, 50%)

Findings...How Are Coaches Most Helpful? Why Do Managers Seek Coaching?

3 Themes:

- ▶ Promote professional development (11 participants, 100%)
- ▶ Support with handling conflicts (10 participants, 91%)
- ▶ Provide outsiders' perspective (5 participants, 45%)

Findings...What is the Most Valuable Coaching Contribution? Expected Return on Investment?

2 Themes:

- ▶ Fostering nurse manager self-efficacy and self-awareness (10 participants, 91%)
- ▶ Providing a multi-level positive impact (10 participants, 91%)

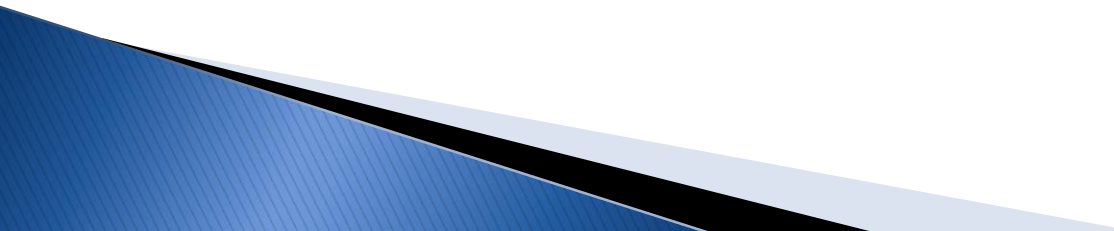
Summary

- ▶ Current statistics indicate that the nursing workforce is aging with 45% of RNs over the age of 50 *AND* the age of nurse leaders is even older (*Sherman, 2011*)
- ▶ One survey found that of the organizations studied, 50% of their leaders were over age 50 *AND* > 75% in some organizations (*Sherman, 2011*)
- ▶ Therefore, it is crucial that we find ways to develop, support, and retain nurse managers for the future

Summary...

- ▶ **Our findings indicate that:**
 - Professional coaches may be one strategy for providing this development and support
 - Positive multi-level organizational impact can result from nurse managers participating in coaching engagements
 - Quality and financial metrics can be positively impacted when nurse managers are professionally coached

Future Directions...

- ▶ More attention must be devoted to the development and support of nurse managers, as the role continues to expand and become more complex
 - ▶ Multiple strategies need to be developed for use with nurse managers
 - ▶ Interventional studies must be conducted to explore more extensively the outcomes of using professional coaching with nurse managers
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QUESTIONS?