



Development of Proposal for Student Nurse Intern Program

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ABSTRACT

Scope:
There is a problem with the NCR of IU Health having enough BSN RNs hired and working shifts in our hospitals. This creates unfavorable outcomes that impact all pillars. A plan proposed addressing this problem is the creation of a student nurse intern program.

Significance:
The development of a proposal for a nurse internship program is significant for three reasons.

- The need to attract , recruit and retain BSN RNs
- The need for transition programs to anxiety and trauma in transition
- There is a small amount of literature specifically about student nurse internship programs

Evaluation Process:

- Number of students recruited
- Number of students that hire on full or part time RNs upon graduation
- Number of RNs from this program that are still employed one year from start date as RN

BACKGROUND

This problem is not unique to the North Central Region of IU Health. The issue is nationwide and has, for the most part, been going on for decades. It is difficult to attract enough RNs in general in the North Central Region of IU Health due to competition from other hospitals in the greater Indianapolis area. It is also difficult due to compensation differences in the area. Though IU Health seeks to remain at approximately the 50th percentile for compensation; this market changes rapidly. The market for Baccalaureate RNs is especially tight due to the looming year of 2020 which marks the goal year for the IOM recommendation of 80% of hospital RNs to be Baccalaureate prepared. Our hospital continues to hire Associate Degree (ASN) prepared RNs, though they are required to earn a BSN within five years of hire date. There is no change in pay from ASN to BSN prepared RNs.

OBJECTIVES

1. The learner will understand the recommendation from the Institute of Medicine (IOM) regarding percent of BSN nurses on hospital staff and time frame.
2. The learner will be able to describe at least two models to improve the transition experience from student nurse to practicing nurse.
3. The learner will be able to describe at least two reasons for the shortage of nurses identified in current literature
4. The learner will be able to name at least two advantages of utilizing a nurse internship model for a hospital's transition model.

INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE RECOMMENDATION

The Institute of Medicine (IOM) released their report entitled "The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health" in 2010. The IOM set eight goals with five focusing on hiring and retention practices of healthcare institutions. The two recommendations that are relevant to this project are "increasing the nurse residency programs" and "increasing the proportion of nurses with a baccalaureate degree working in hospitals to eighty percent by the year 2020." (Pittman et al.) The goal of increasing residencies is related to this project because the differentiation between internship and residency in the literature is loose at best. Internship is often a lead in to residency. The goal of increasing baccalaureate prepared registered nurses is directly tied to this project as only baccalaureate students will be eligible for the program. The IOM's goal drives that criteria.

MODELS FOR IMPROVING TRANSITION

A very informative systematic review was published in 2015. This review explored the effectiveness of the main strategies utilized in supporting newly qualified nurses in the transition in the clinical workplace. Only "quantitative studies investigated that investigated the effectiveness of support strategies for newly qualified graduate nurses" were included . There were a number of statements made about what is "already known about the topic:" These statements are quite relevant as we initiate a nurse internship program in our region and in deciding which type of transition support makes the most sense. The statements are: "The transition form nursing student to qualified nurse can be traumatic for many nurses." "Several initiatives, such as residency/internship programs, transition programs, preceptorship and mentorship have been introduced mainly on a local basis to try and ease the transition." "Little is known about the structure, content and duration of successful programs to reduce problems and which, if any, actually impact on key outcomes for both the individual and employing organization." (Edwards et al) These statements, from this international publication illustrate that that no real template exists for easing the transition from student to RN. Our proposed program of hiring students for pay is supported in the literature as preparing students for a less traumatic transition from student to RN. Further, the authors of this systematic review state in the conclusion that: "The review highlights that the type of support strategy is less important . It is the focus upon and investment in easing new graduate nurses' transition by organizations that is important, rather than simply leaving them to acclimatize to their new role themselves." (Edwards et al) Starting the support while still student is clearly a good way to provide transition support.

REASONS FOR NURSING SHORTAGE

The nursing shortage is a world wide problem. If it is left unresolved, it could have a serious impact on the provision of health care. Career opportunities and practice environments have been found to be important in improving nurses' job satisfaction, along with a supportive manager and working environment (Zenobia et al., 2013). It is an important opportunity to start the supportive relationship from the very beginning while nurses are still students. Internationally, researchers have identified that the transition from student nurse to practicing nurse as a difficult time interwoven with horizontal violence, stresses, feelings of being unprepared, problems with socialization, reality shock and personal change (Missen et al., 2014). Four major areas that contribute to the nursing shortage are: the aging workforce, smaller number of nursing school enrollees, changing work climate, and nursing's poor image. Four possible solutions to the general shortage are: recruiting, retention, image improvement, and support of legislation. Another very important factor is coworker relations. This is considered to be the most important nonmonetary factor (Wedgeworth et al., 2011).

ADVANTAGES OF NURSE INTERNSHIP MODEL

The literature on nursing internship programs is minimal. There is a great deal of research exploring the disparity between clinical preparation and transition to nursing practice. The current nursing shortage has increased the number of programs focused on hiring and retaining new graduate nurses. As far back as 2002, the Joint Commission described a continental divide between nursing education and nursing practice (Steen et al., 2011). A quantitative study from 2011 investigated the transition from student nurse to registered nurse. BSN students who were in good Academic standing, were eligible to apply for a student nurse intern position at local hospitals. Participants gained clinical experience, earned course credits and received pay for hours worked. Participation in the program was allowed as long as the student nurses were in good academic standing and management's evaluation of the student nurse was favorable. There were 50 participants surveyed at the end of the experience. Of the 50, 38 hired on the unit on which they interned. Eleven of the participants stayed in the hospital where they interned, but changed units. Other survey results indicated that factors such as knowing personnel such as RNs, management, secretaries and physicians made the transition easier. Overall , the internship demonstrated improved confidence in task performance, care of more acute patients, and patient family interaction. Seven-two percent of surveyed student nurses believed that internship increased career opportunities (Steen et al., 2011)

Though there is not a huge amount of literature on nurse internships, the idea and practice is certainly nothing new. A 2012 article reports that in the earlier decades of the 1900s, newly licensed RNs (NLRNs) making the transition from school to work received only a day or two for orientation to the hospital. Many NLRNs who had worked for pay while students did not need any orientation and, when they graduated, were often the only RNs on the unit except the charge nurse (Kramer et al., 2012). Working on the units as an intern is sure to help smooth the transition from student to RN; most especially in the same hospital and same unit by allowing for relationship development and observation to aid the development of delegation and observation and coaching for the development of the skill of prioritization. For these reasons, the student internship helps to form a recruiting pipeline of BSN students as they become NLRNs.

A recent article reports on the elements that contribute to the success of a paid nursing internship program. This program was introduced in 2004 and was a ten-week paid internship offered as a fourth semester summer course to selected students. There were six students who interned in this experience. Three of the students continued part time as RNs on the same unit where they worked for pay as interned (Paul et. At, 2011)

Short Term Support

Plan to Support Post Implementation, Short Term

- Communication to Schools of Nursing
 - ✓ Application dates
 - ✓ Requirements
 - ✓ Number of student Nurses needed
 - ✓ Orientation dates
- Communication to hiring managers
 - ✓ Application
 - ✓ Hiring dates and expectations
- Screening of applicants

CONCLUSIONS

Plan to Support Post Implementation, Long Term

- Use of conceptual framework for interns of other disciplines
- Data
 - ✓ Number of applicants from each school
 - ✓ Number of students that become FT BSN RNs in our region
 - ✓ Number of participants who are still employed as RNs one year after becoming RNs
- Teams must remain intact
 - ✓ Determination of number of students to hire each hire date
 - ✓ Adjustments to orientation, didactic, skills day, etc

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