Novice Nurse Support Group: Bridging the Gap by Supporting our Future
Danielle Coyne BSN, RN, CAPA  Andrea Sweeny MSN, RN-BC
Christiana Care Health System, Newark, DE

BACKGROUND
Between 35-60% of new graduate nurses change their place of employment after the first year.
- At some hospitals, new graduate nurses account for 50% of the nurse turnover rates.
- Organizations report spending an average of $300,000 or up to 5% of the hospital’s annual budget on nurse turnover each year.
- Novice nurses report feeling stressed, inadequate, and helpless and do not feel comfortable in their role as a nurse until 12-18 months.
- When novice nurses do not ask questions, it is assumed that they are competent. Novice nurses feel left feeling alone, unsure and can potentially place patients at harm.
- Improved interpersonal relationships with experienced nurses increases job satisfaction and retention.
- In order to decrease attrition, supportive measures are needed for the new graduates.
- Literature reveals that actual costs of nursing turnover can be underestimated due to all of the time, work and departments involved in the process of orientation and onboarding of nurses.

OBJECTIVES / PURPOSE
- A novice nurse support group was implemented by veteran nurses on a progressive cardiac care unit to improve interpersonal relationships between novice and veteran nurses, retain new graduates, and improve job staff satisfaction by 30% over six months.

SETTING
The support group sessions took place on a progressive cardiac care unit at Christiana Care. Ten novice nurses with less than two years of experience were identified and asked to participate in the support group. Veteran nurses with more than two years of experience were asked to volunteer to facilitate the sessions with the unit’s Assistant Nurse Manager and Staff Development Specialist.

METHODS
- A pre-survey was sent to all ten novice nurses that chose to participate to obtain a baseline assessment of their job satisfaction and relationships with veteran nurses on the unit.
- Sessions were held on a monthly basis outside of working hours at times in which the novice nurses selected.
- Prior to the start of the sessions, veteran nurses were asked to submit previous experiences that described challenges and mistakes made as a nurse. These experiences were shared with the new nurses to showcase that they are not alone in their transition.
- Sessions were run as an open forum where the novice nurses shared their positive and negative experiences while veteran nurses and leadership offered support, guidance and advice.
- After six months, the post-survey was resent to the novice nurses to determine if there was an increase in job satisfaction and interpersonal relationships between novice and experienced nurses.

RESULTS
- A comparison of pre and post survey results yielded a 20% increase in positive results.
- At the end of six months, there was a 100% retention rate of novice nurses.
- In addition, the majority of the group participants expressed interest in joining committees, and go back to school.
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Novice Nurse Survey Pre-Post Support Group Questionnaire

1. Do you feel like you can ask questions while working?
2. Do you feel you have a friend at work?
3. Do you have a resource or mentor at work that is approachable?
4. Do you feel judged by your peers?
5. Do you have a place to go to discuss work related incidents?
6. Do you feel judged by your mistakes
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11. Do you have a place to go to discuss work related incidents?
12. Do you feel judged by your mistakes
13. Are you interested in unit based activities?

We rise by lifting others.
Robert G. Ingersoll