

STAND Method: Changing Nursing Culture from the Bedside Up

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ABSTRACT:

Nursing culture depends on several factors and can have both positive and negative effects on nurses and on patient care. According to a review of literature and the Magnet model, it is highly recognized that when people are in an environment that fosters growth, encourages diversity and learning, employees become more engaged, are more dedicated and have a higher level of dedication.

The American Nurses Association (ANA) Code of Ethics (2015) is the standard for nurses to establish their personal and professional guidelines for professional and ethical values. Nurses have the responsibility of compassionately investing in other nurses by developing their self-worth, fostering confidence, and valuing their uniqueness. The ANA's Principles of Environmental Health for Nursing Practice (2015) states, "a healthy work environment is one that is safe, empowering, and satisfying...it is not merely the absence of real and perceived threats to health, but a place of physical, mental, and social well-being, supporting optimal health and safety."

Stressful work environments can:

- create anxiety
- have negative physical and psychological consequences for nurses
- perpetuate feelings of hopelessness and powerlessness
- lead to a decrease in nursing knowledge and advancement and an increase in turnover and career changes, which may result in poor patient outcomes.



The creators of the **STAND** method identified the previous nursing culture not being in alignment with Christiana Care's Core Values and did not foster the growth of newer nurses and often the "eat your young" motto was adopted by nurses of tenure. The **STAND** method was then developed.

DEFINITIONS:

Safety is providing physical and emotional security. Providing safety will enable staff to thrive, learn, and increase favorable patient outcomes. Respecting others by stopping and listening to their concerns, will allow them to feel heard and valued. Creating a safe, non-judgmental environment for staff to ask questions will increase staff knowledge and help avoid mistakes, thus creating a safe environment for patients. Supporting staff morale will aid in the psychological well-being of staff members.

Tolerance is taking the time to listen to other's point of view and letting them know you value their thoughts and concerns. Being empathetic to each other, will create an environment of acceptance for their strengths and weaknesses. Also, taking into consideration the variations in nursing abilities, personalities, and experiences will aid in a supportive environment.

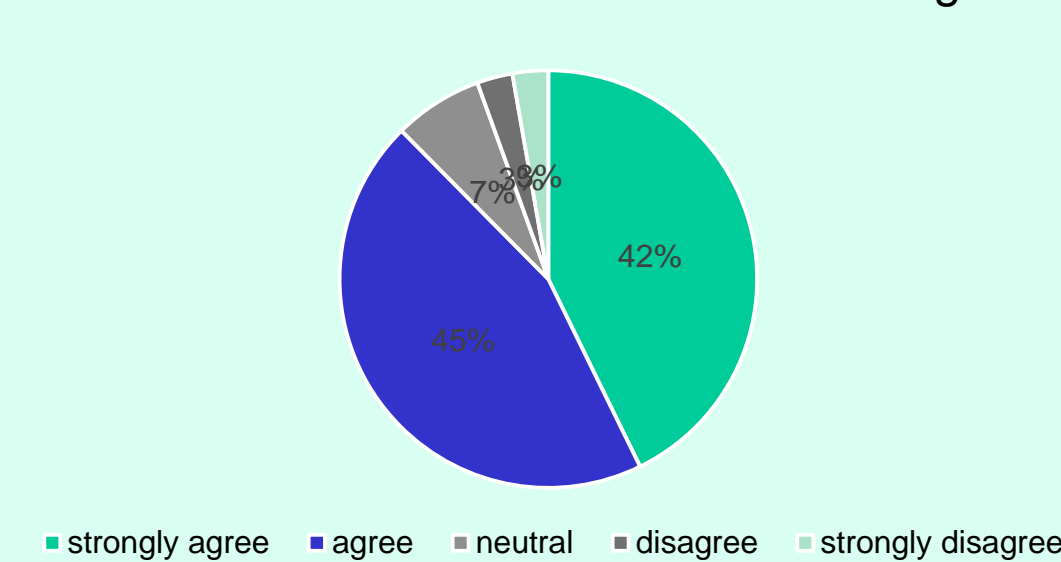
Awareness is acceptance of new staff and current evidence based practices to facilitate a positive awareness in the workplace. Accountability for own mistakes, workload, and professional behavior holds the bar high for others to do the same. Creating positive awareness in the workplace by being aware of how our words and behaviors affect others.

Nurturing is demonstrated by creating a non-toxic environment and is crucial in resuscitating a negative nursing culture. Promoting a non-judgmental environment will foster the mental and emotional growth of staff. Creating a team that is in synergy with each other will create an environment of peace for the patient. The end goal of never losing sight of our purpose here, which is to best care for our patients, and can only be accomplished if we are emotionally, physically, and psychologically whole.

Diversity is defined by developing strengths and celebrating variabilities among staff. Diversity is necessary since each staff member encompasses a unique set of skills, temperaments, past experiences, ethnicities, and cultural backgrounds. Defending against passive aggressive behaviors and active horizontal violence will set a standard of no tolerance for workplace violence. Defusing situations before they escalate and discouraging unprofessional behaviors will change a dysfunctional work environment into a functional one.



STAND Method Effectiveness Rating



INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND:

S - Following physical **safety** programs and being cognitive of potential risk factors in the workplace, implementing a team method and early intervention strategies to deescalate situations can promote staff safety. Key elements of a culture of safety in an organization include the establishment of safety as an organizational priority, teamwork, patient involvement, openness/transparency, and accountability (Lamb, Studdert, Bohmer, Berwick, & Brennan, 2003). Ideas for workplace interventions: peer mentors, professional conversations between peers

T - In a nursing culture of **tolerance**, nurses are able to learn from each other in an environment that fosters growth and takes into account knowledge base and individual ideas. OSHA (2017) believes that a well-written and implemented workplace violence prevention program, combined with engineering controls, administrative controls and training can reduce the incidence of workplace violence in both the private sector and federal workplaces. Ideas for workplace interventions: acknowledge nursing abilities (Synergy model), each nurse's unique personality and previous professional experience

A - Being **aware** in nursing culture creates an environment of unity, safety, and accountability. According to Daniel Goleman (2016), the competencies associated with being socially aware are:

Empathy: understanding the other person's emotions, needs and concerns; Organizational Awareness: the ability to understand the politics within an organization and how these affect the people working in them; and Service: the ability to understand and meet the needs of clients and customers. Ideas for workplace interventions: proactive steps in identifying potential harm and corrective measures, stress level monitoring and encouraging caring for each other

N - A **nurturing** nursing culture relies on creating a non-toxic nurturing environment which is crucial in resuscitating a negative nursing culture. A non-toxic nursing environment includes having acceptance of individual ideology and the differences that make others unique. In other words, employees must feel a sense of personal control over their work and their activities within the work environment (Bowes, 1994). Ideas for workplace interventions: "safe zones" to ask questions, celebrating personal achievement, utilizing individual strengths in training and mentoring others

D - **Diversity** is what makes the nursing profession dynamic and beneficial. According to Edmondson and Roloff (2015), creating psychologically safe environments is one way to overcome such incidences...Psychological safety can enable team diversity to be better accessed and leveraged, reaping benefits associated with diverse sets of skills, knowledge, and backgrounds. Nurses are armed with various temperaments, possess a myriad of skills and come from different cultural backgrounds. "Providing culturally appropriate care within a professional relationship, within the context of mentorship is crucial in attaining mutual respect and trust" (an Essay on Mentorship). Ideas for workplace interventions: cultural events, opportunities to share backgrounds, nursing week themed events, and cultural educational series

INTERVENTIONS:

The program included:

- An initial brief learning needs assessment to discern the need for the training
- Educational event topics: effective communication skills, dealing with difficult people, embracing our diverse skills and strengthening our weakness
- Monthly educational workshops
- Fun food related events to promote and encourage staff to participate in a nonthreatening, safe and nurturing environment
- Learner ready brochures, hand outs and interactive events
- Follow up survey

DISCUSSION:

Developing a safe and accepting environment where nurses can learn from seasoned nurses will allow questions to be asked, allow growth of personal and nursing knowledge, encourage self-development, create confidence, increase skill sets, and avoid errors. The result will provide better outcomes for patients, which is the aim of the **STAND** method. Our first survey was investigational to identify the need for a culture improvement program. The key focus was to empower the change from within, meaning from the bedside up. The team then took the input from the nurses and developed the **STAND** method.

The **STAND** method was then deployed over a two year period utilizing all the methods discussed in the interventions section. During the program, it was realized that deploying the method was easy; however, getting buy-in and maintaining the momentum was a challenge. The post educational survey was built into a 5 point Likert scale to measure the effectiveness of the **STAND** method. After the one year of instituting the **STAND** method, a post survey was sent out.

RESULTS:

The post survey ascertained the effectiveness of the program, how it integrated into their jobs, how it aligned with Christiana Care Core Values/Magnet, how easily the method was able to use, and would they recommend the method. The method consistently achieved a success rating of at least 87% in all categories. The two participants had a negative survey did not leave any suggestions or comments. The team observed that more nurses participated in the program than completed the email survey.

CONCLUSION:

The challenge for nurses is to balance the needs of nurses in an environment that fosters professional growth and development without increasing anxiety and fear. The success of nursing teams and stabilizing the profession lay in the hands and on the shoulders of our current workforce. The ever changing nursing culture proves that nurses need to band together and make conscious efforts in refining the existing culture. We need to coexist, utilize our strengths, recognize our weakness; to grow and develop at all levels of nursing. Changes on a micro and macro level will come through consistency and with everyone taking a **STAND** together. (The project was given permission from Dr. Bayne to proceed, as it did not require IRB approval.)

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