Improved Work Environment and Teamwork for Triage Nurses

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Figure 1

ABSTRACT

Triage nurses working remotely during the pandemic have decreased job satisfaction and engagement due to limited peer interaction. Engaged nurses who view their work environment as positive have more job satisfaction, less risk of error, better patient outcomes, and less likely to leave their current position. It is crucial to have dynamic leadership, positive peer relationships, and collaboration to enhance the work environment. This project aims to implement two engagement strategies voted on by triage staff to improve team cohesiveness, promote stakeholder buy-in, and create a healthy work environment. The AACN Healthy Work Environment Assessment is administered pre- and post-plan implementation to measure the effectiveness of the interventions after six months. The AACN assessment tool is helpful for comparison and benchmarking with other departments throughout the country to ensure that essential AACN work environment standards are met. If the plan is successful, further research can be initiated to gather empirical evidence supporting specific strategies in improving the work environment.

PICO QUESTION

For Sutter triage employees (P), does implementation of team engagement strategies (I) versus no engagement (C) promote improved work environment and cohesiveness (O) after six months (T)?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review identified essential themes that promote teamwork and highlighted the benefits of creating a healthy work environment.

- Dynamic leaders are essential in promotion and implementation of engagement strategies.[3]

- Leadership can improve work environment with autonomy, shared decision making, upward development, and positive peer relationships.[6]

- Positive peer relationships and collaboration among nurses and physicians are crucial to nursing retention and favorable opinion of work environments.[1]

- Healthy work environments created by influential leaders that foster positive peer relationships can reduce risk of error, infection, and readmission rates among the patient's they care for. [2,4]

PROJECT METHODOLOGY

This project aims to create a healthy work environment and increase team cohesiveness and engagement for triage nurses working remotely. Remote employment and decreased face-to-face interaction during the pandemic have negatively impacted employee engagement and job satisfaction among triage staff. Leadership implements strategies to promote positive peer relationships and teamwork to improve current morale. In addition, the American Association of Critical Care Nurses Healthy Work Environment Assessment tool is used to assess the staff's opinions of the current work environment pre-project implementation and post-project while also helping to prioritize engagement strategies. After six months, an evaluation is completed to determine if the strategies were effective.

Plan and Development

The initial stages of project implementation consist of a meeting among direct employee supervisors to discuss five engagement strategies presented to the employees and voted upon.

- Employees are then asked to complete the **AACN Healthy Work Environment Assessment** to obtain baseline data.
- Engagement strategies are presented in survey format the day after the pre-assessment closes.
- Strategies are presented to employees to help create buy-in and promote an environment of shared decision making.

Evaluation

Project evaluation is measured with the AACN's survey reports from pre- and post-assessment. Information gathered in the pre-assessment provides information about employees' points of view and feelings before implementing project interventions.

- Monthly meetings with supervisors allow for open expression and discussion for the project's duration. Team leaders encourage feedback and make changes as needed throughout the process.
- The post-assessment provides information about whether the project successfully improved the perceived work environment for triage staff.
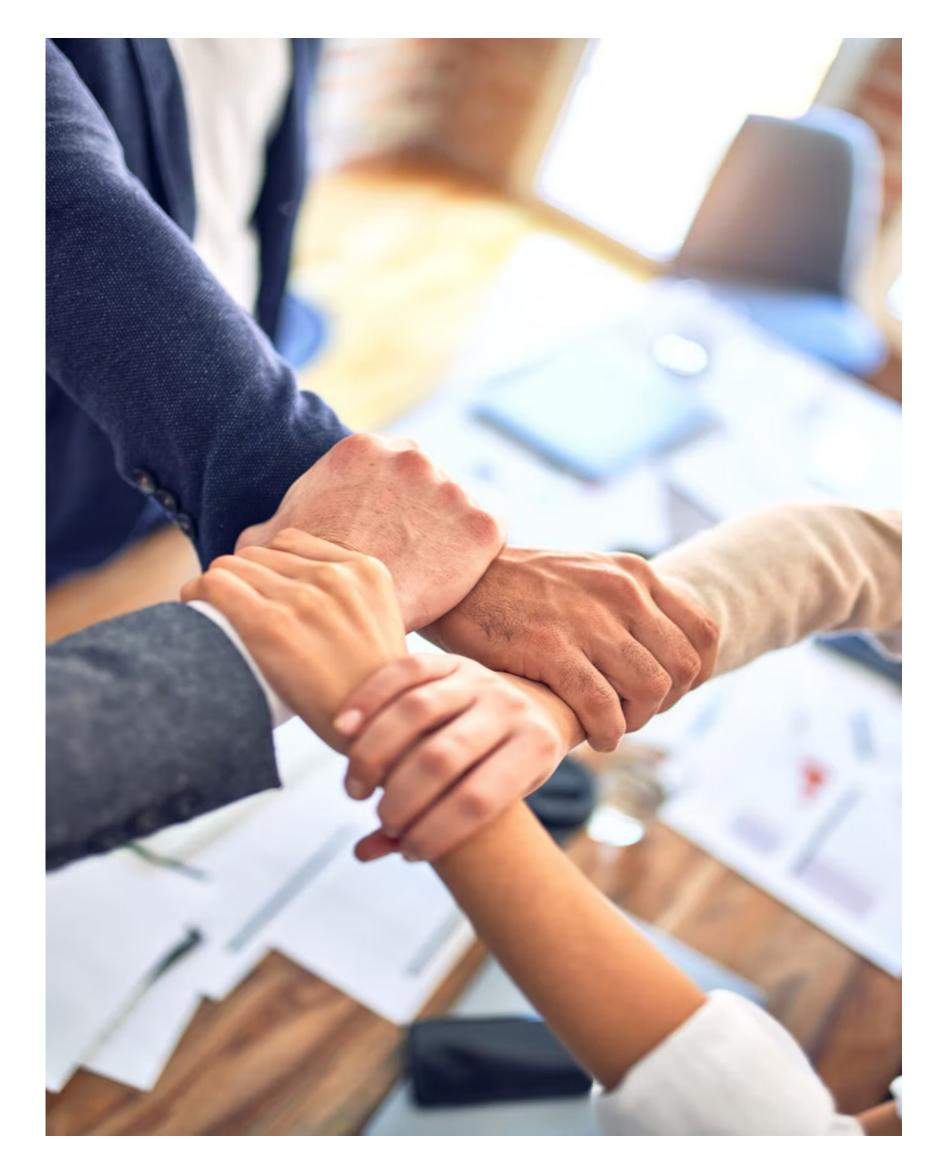

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Figure 2

Figure 3

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Figure 4

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The GRPI (goals, roles, and responsibilities, process, and interpersonal skills) model is one of the oldest and most effective teamwork models.

- It is used for diagnostics and problem-solving when teams are not performing at their highest level.

- **Four–Step Project**

  - The **first step** is to look at organizational goals and determine if everyone is aligned. All team members must be knowledgeable of goals and work in unison to meet them.

  - The **second step** in the GRPI model is to address roles within the company. Roles must be clear and free of conflict to ensure that all team members can work together cohesively.

  - Processes evaluation is **third step** and highlights how the team communicates, distributes work, solves problems, and uses resources.

  - The **last step** of the GRPI model assesses the team's communication styles, level of trust, and teamwork.[5]

CONCLUSIONS

This project aims to select engagement strategies to increase job satisfaction and improve peer collaboration. The literature supports the implementation of this project and highlights many possible benefits. Triage nurses can have improved satisfaction and increased intention to stay in their position if the triage department selects dynamic leaders who recognize the importance of positive peer relationships and a positive work environment. This department can improve the quality of care delivered to patients through improved communication and supportive peer relationships. The evidence in the reviewed literature serves as the driver of change.

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Figures

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