# Structured Orientation Program for Newly Hired Nurses

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## BACKGROUND

Nurses are a critical part of the healthcare team, often the main face-to-face contact a patient has with their healthcare team. Unfortunately, the nurse turnover rate is increasing, causing opportunities for processes to break down during the orientation process.[2] Some areas affected due to high turnover include inadequate training, inexperienced nurses training new nurses, and decreased confidence in orienting nurses. This project aims to provide an orientation program to develop nurse's skills, experiences, and competence in addition to reducing the possibility of nurse turnover, in turn increasing patient safety.[3,4,5]

PICO Question: **Does a structured orientation process improve retention rates for newly hired registered nurses?**

**Evidence Suggests**
- A structured orientation program improves competency and safety
- Orientation programs decrease nurse turnover
- The design of the orientation program and mentors affect the success of the program



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## METHODS

- Recognized the problem of increased nurse turnover
- Discussed possible causes of nurse departure among the nursing team and quality team
- Identified the absence of an orientation program as a cause
- Reviewed evidence-based-practice research to find possible ways to structure an orientation program
- Designed an orientation program for newly hired nurses
- Chose the PDSA Cycle as the framework for the implementation of the orientation program.

**Plan-Do-Study-Act Cycle** [2]
- Planning phase – a concise statement of change and steps to make the change
- Do phase – trial the change and observe
- Study phase – reviews the measurements of the change
- Act – Identifies needed improvement



The Model for Improvement

**AIM** What are we trying to accomplish?

**MEASURES** How will we know that a change is an improvement?

**CHANGES** What changes can we make that will result in improvement?

Act  Plan
Study  Do

Image found at https://www.ahrq.gov/downloads/ncepcr/pf-modules/model-pdsa/story.html

## EVALUATION

Planning and implementing an orientation program takes collaboration with an interdisciplinary approach through obtaining buy-in from the board of directors. The program will be evaluated to show progress and continued growth to maintain funding for the project. The surveys will be provided to the newly oriented employee at the 85-day check-in. The following steps will be taken to evaluate the program.
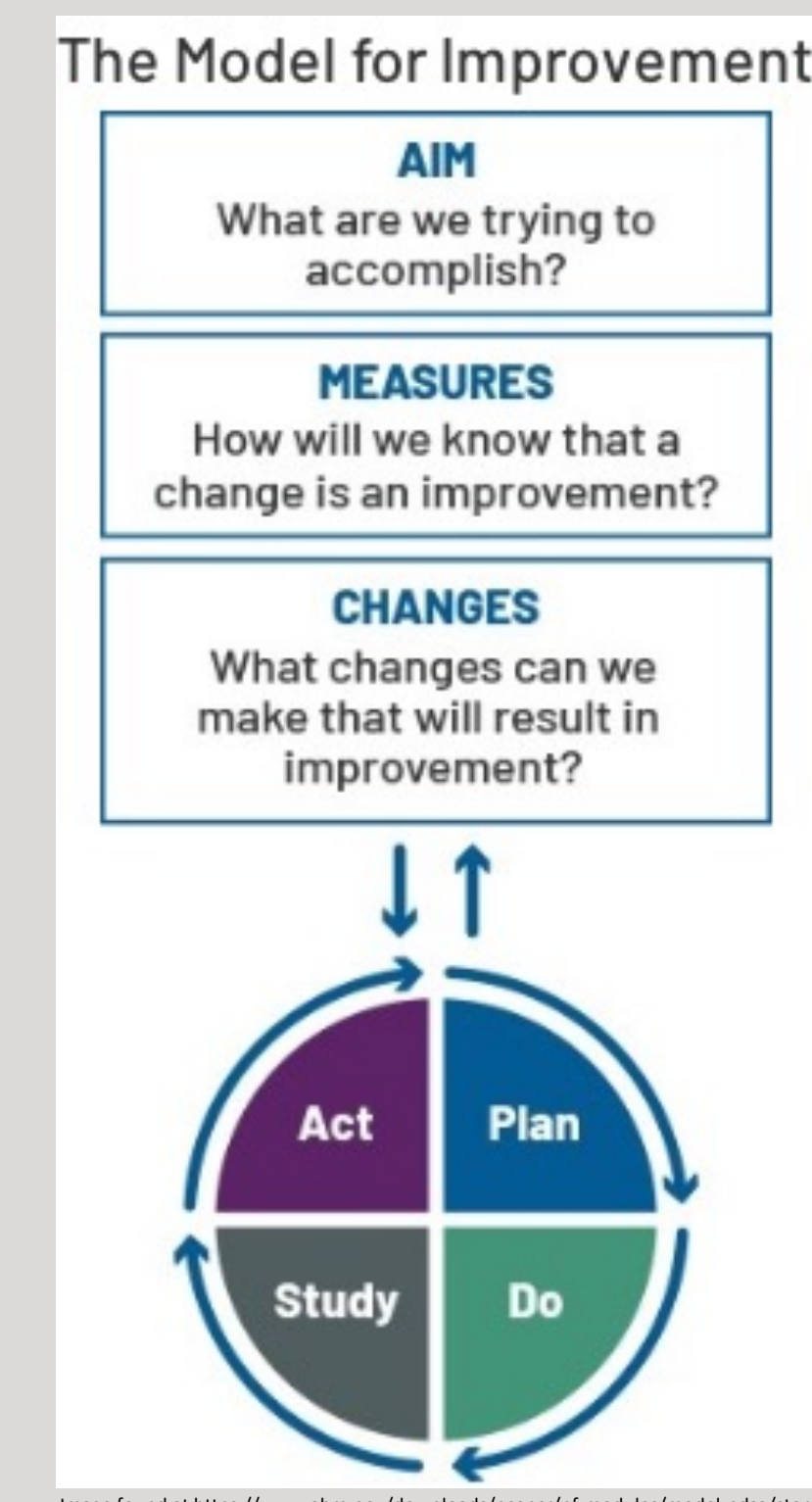
- 30 day, 60 day, & 85 day check-in's
- Bi-weekly mentor meetings
- Post orientation survey
- Quarterly retention rates
- Annual retention rates.

## CONCLUSIONS

Literature indicates a structured orientation program can decrease nurse turnover by increasing knowledge, competency, and confidence through mentoring, skills, competencies, checklists, check-ins, and monitoring of progress. The design of the program can affect success. However, utilizing the Plan-Do-Study-Act framework, gaps in the program can be identified, and processes improved. In addition to increasing nurse retention, patient safety and financial benefit may improve, creating a healthier organization.

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