Development of an Emergency Department Mentoring Program for New Graduate Nurses

Helping novice nurses become competent ED nurses

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ABSTRACT
Emergency departments (ED) require nurses to have a vast and in-depth knowledge and skill base to perform their work. Novice nurses within the ED have higher burnout, turnover, stress, and retention problems than other areas. The program pairs mentors with mentees and helps them address the issues and stressors that new nurses face. The results of mentoring have shown marked improvements of knowledge, skill, and critical thinking, while decreasing stress, and retention problems than new hires face. The results of mentoring within the ED were improved job satisfaction, higher knowledge and skills, decreased stress, and higher retention of staff.

PICOT QUESTION
In new nurse hires in the emergency department (P), how does a mentoring program (I) compare to current training and orientation of new hires (C) affect the skills, education and ability to perform within the emergency department (O) within a year (T)?

LITERATURE REVIEW
The review supported the need of mentoring within the ED, with the following.

• Addressing nursing shortages within the ED (1,2).
• Decreasing nurse turnover (3,4,5).
• Higher competency of nurses who were mentored (6).
• Improved job satisfaction (2,4,5,6) and retention (1,2,5,6).
• Improved critical thinking skills (7).

ED mentoring programs improve new nurse satisfaction, skills, knowledge, and abilities (8). This program was the objective of this evidence based project. It includes a plan for implementation, evaluation of strengths, and limitations. Participants will obtain BLS, ACLS, PALS, TNCC, and ENPC during the project. Benner’s theory provides focus and guides this project.

• Novice – mentee starting point.
• Advanced beginner – mentee is working and taking required education.
• Competent – mentee at end of project, having taken all courses and earned all certifications.

Plan and Implementation
• Tailored mentoring program specific to the ED.
• Mentors that are expert level nurses in the ED and willing to be mentors.
• Support from management and administration.
• Multiple teaching environments in addition to clinical work.

Mentoring Benefits:
• Decreased turnover.
• Improved morale.
• Development of competent nurses.
• Improved job satisfaction.
• Decreased stress.
• Improved knowledge and skills.
• Greater critical thinking ability.
• Improved performance.

Evaluation
• Mentee evaluations done pre-program and at 3,6, and 12 months.
• Evaluations will address skills, knowledge, ability, critical thinking, and interaction of mentee.
• Monitor mentee progression from novice to competent level (9)

REFERENCES
9. Benner’s theory addresses five levels of proficiency (7). The ED mentor program focuses on taking a novice nurse to a competent level. The theory provides focus and evaluation.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
Patricia Benner’s theory addresses five levels of proficiency (7). The ED mentor program focuses on taking a novice nurse to a competent level. The theory provides focus and evaluation.

• Novice – a nurse with no prior experience.
• Advanced beginner – prior exposure, starting to act independently, though uncomfortable with this.
• Competent – sees long-range goals, identify priorities, but lacks speed and flexibility.
• Proficient – sees entire clinical situation, guided by experience.
• Expert – possess an intuitive grasp of the situation, are fluid, flexible and work with certainty. Deep understanding of the situation.

CONCLUSIONS
Mentoring helps mentee nurses make the adjustment needed to work in the ED. Mentor program provided tools to help mentee –
• learn, adjust, adapt, and meet the challenges of ED nursing.
• Improved performance.
• Higher retention.
• Improved skills and critical thinking.
• Competent level ED nurse.