The first phase of the nurse mentor program will involve approval by unit management. Following approval, mentor training will be held for all charge nurses with an expectation that they will now also serve as nurse mentors. The nurse mentors will be provided with an orientation-training program that reviews mentoring, outlines the mentoring plan, and details an evaluation plan.

Nurse mentors who are assigned to new graduate hires will be asked to communicate with their mentees on a weekly basis until they have completed mandatory new hire mentoring issues including:

- Communication
- Nursing skills
- Delegation
- Self-care
- Orientation to staff procedure
- Teamwork
- Safety initiatives
- Collaboration

**TIMELINE/PROCESS**

Once the orientation list has been completed, the mentor and mentee will sign the orientation agreement and submit it to management. Thereafter, the mentee will:

- Contact the mentor as needed and the mentor will reach out to the mentee monthly until a year has passed
- Quarterly, mentors will be audited by management to ensure each nurse is being mentored, and that the orientation is being followed
- In the case that a nurse mentor cannot fulfill the role or leaves the unit, a new nurse mentor will replace them
- Quarterly, a portion of the monthly charge nurse meeting that takes place will include additional training and reminders for mentors

**EVALUATION**

In order to further improve staff retention:

- Surveys will be distributed to the mentees and mentors to receive feedback on the mentoring program and unit support of new graduate hires
- Surveys will be delivered upon hire, and then quarterly during their first year of hire
- After the first year, surveys will be delivered semiannually

**RESULTS**

The findings from the literature review in terms of supporting nurses through nurse mentoring is reflective of the work of Dr. Patricia Benner’s from Novice to Expert theory (1). This theory was selected because it clearly outlines the stages of a nurse from the point of a nursing student to an expert nurse and what contributes to each phase in order to progress to the next one (2). As it applies to nurse mentoring, Benner’s (1982) theory states a mentor can be useful in:

- Providing guidelines
- Pointing out specifics in a situation to a novice nurse in order to more fully allow them to grasp the entirety of situations
- Provide support in clinical situations
- Aide in broadening perspective from focusing solely on the rules, to look at a more global perspective

Benner (1982) explains that as a nurse progressing through the levels of competency, it is development of knowledge combined with clinical experience that appears to push a nurse from one stage to the next.

**CONCLUSIONS**

Transitioning to working as an RN for new graduates can be challenging especially within the inpatient hospital setting. The nurse mentor program has been validated through research in improving nurse satisfaction and decreasing nurse turnover. After receiving approval and training, the program will be implemented by the new mentors utilizing the specific research and literature that has been evaluated. Following implementation the mentors will be audited using the new hire mentoring accountability document, and evaluation surveys that will be completed by mentees. The evaluations will be helpful in improving the program and finding strengths and weaknesses.

**REFERENCES**