

Magnet[®] Exemplar Examples: Nurse Residency and Nurse Transition Programs

Nurse Residency Programs—Perioperative, Inpatient, and PACU/SDU:

These programs represent an approximate investment of \$5,270,000 for the sixty-two nurses who have participated in the Nurse Residency Program from 2013 to date. The return on investment has been impressive as well, resulting in highly competent, well-socialized, and professionally satisfied nurses, as well as a 93.54 percent retention rate.

A unique aspect of this program includes the prolonged length of time for nurses in the residency program beyond the typical six-month period. Additionally, the program is open to both new-to-practice nurses and experienced nurses. During a site visit, the nurses stated that the Nurse Residency Program was a significant differentiator in their selection of this organization for employment over other hospitals in the area that do not provide such an opportunity. Nurses strongly attributed the Nurse Residency Program to their success as clinical nurses, and reported that once completing the program they felt competent to deliver quality and safe care to patients.

This organization has integrated two programs that facilitate successful onboarding of new graduate nurses and prepare them to take vacated positions within their specialty areas. This innovation has prepared nurses who are able to provide patient care in very short order, and has resulted in a system-wide RN vacancy rate of only 2 percent. The first program is a ten-week formal Nurse Residency Program for new RNs. It is founded on the Benner Novice to Expert Theory framework and provides both didactic classroom experience and simulations in addition to mentored on-unit orientation time. The program has both daily and end-of-program evaluations that provide quantitative and qualitative feedback.

The ten-week program assigns a preceptor who serves as a resource person, role model, teacher, and coach. Following the ten-week period, participants are provided with additional professional development opportunities at the six- and twelve-month points. The program is evidence based, using blended learning through instructor-led classroom days that are paired with experiential learning in a simulated environment and with a preceptor in the clinical environment. The second program provides an “on deck” means of onboarding the new grads into the work environment.

The new grads are employed (without benefits) while in the “Flex” program. Talented new graduates are hired to fill anticipated vacancies. They work in the environment and are oriented to two units. Under this framework, the system is able to reduce onboarding orientation costs and the unit staff identifies the new nurses that are a fit for their nursing environment. When positions become vacant, the new nurses are hired into those positions as productive staff members due to their experience as Flex staff members and previous new

graduate residency onboarding. During unit rounds and also in breakfast, lunch, and dinner meetings, this program was highlighted and illustrated as a way to create a pipeline of prepared staff members to fill vacancies in a cost-effective manner.

Transition of nurses transferring within the organization from one specialty care area to a different specialty care:

The ED Fellowship Program, which was started in 2012, is a twelve-week program that includes an interactive and online Emergency Nurses Association (ENA) Emergency Nursing Orientation. The curriculum includes traditional classroom didactics, hands-on opportunities, and simulated case studies and scenarios.

Over the years, as refinements have been made to the program, the ED Fellowship retention rate has increased: it went from 67 percent in 2011 (prior to the start of the Fellowship), to 75 percent in 2012 and 2013, and to 100 percent in 2014.

Since instituting the ED Fellowship, the pre- to post-test ED Fellowship Basic Knowledge Assessment Tool (BKAT) scores have consistently improved following program attendance. Fellowships are uniquely available for almost all specialties, including ICU, ED, Education, OR, medical-surgical areas, and the charge nurse role. Use of the Simulation Lab, which includes a very large mock ED, delivery and nursery rooms, etc., is incorporated into the fellows' training.

Transition of graduate nurses into the work environment:

Graduate nurses are supported and mentored in their first year of practice by participation in the Nurse Residency Program and the Center for Professional Excellence. The residency program includes a component that introduces the new graduate nurses to evidence-based practice (EBP) as a professional expectation and, working in small groups, the residents identify issues on their unit to further investigate with the goal to use EBP to improve patient care or the professional work environment.

The residency program supports engaging new nurses from day one to achieve more consistent use of EBPs, and to develop strong leadership and critical-thinking skills as they transition into the professional nurse role. The most recent retention rate for new graduate nurses was reported to be 91 percent. Also supporting the new resident's transition into professional practice is the Center for Professional Excellence. One of the Center's goals is to have poster or podium presentations at all national nursing conferences. To assist with meeting this goal, the Center for Professional Excellence tracks all national conference dates and criteria for abstract submission, and disseminates this information to all nurses, including graduate nurses in the residency program, inviting them to contact the Center for assistance in submission.

To further assist the nurse resident in disseminating their EBP projects and funding, the Center for Professional Excellence staff assist the nurse residents with writing the abstracts, abstract submission, and preparing posters and oral presentations at national conferences. If an abstract is accepted for a poster or podium presentation, the nurse residents are coached on presenting their project findings. Since 2013, a total of eighty-five nurse resident EBP projects were completed; twenty are in process. In 2015, two podium presentations, four poster presentations, and one webinar based on the nurse residents' EBP projects were presented to regional or national audiences. The completed nurse resident EBP projects are posted online by the librarian for access by professionals outside the organization.