Purpose & Objectives

**Objective 1:** The learner will be able to identify how a nurse residency program improves retention rates.

**Objective 2:** The learner will be able to discuss ways education and clinical practice can be aligned to increase competency in a new graduate nurse.

Purpose

- At this pediatric, thirdly designated Magnet institution, our mission is to provide the best care to every child. In doing so, ensuring the successful transition from new graduate nurse to professional nurse is essential in healthcare systems. According to Cosme (2015), patients deserve no less. The Horizon Residency Program is designed to transition new graduate nurses into nursing practice.

- The literature shows standardized nursing residency programs have been proven to decrease turnover, decrease medication errors, increase engagement and strengthen nursing knowledge and skills which support quality patient care (Frantz, 2015). The intention of nurse residency programs is to help new graduates transition to professional nursing practice, adapt to different learning environments, and respond effectively to the challenges nursing practice brings. Reported outcomes of these programs are improved retention rates. (Letourneau & Fater, 2015.)

Methods

- Soon after its initial launch, a restructuring of the Horizon program occurred to better meet the needs of the organization and increase the value added to the program. Nurses are given an in-depth orientation through didactic curriculum, interactive online modules, simulation, and hands-on training with nurse preceptors. The BSN-prepared nurses remain in the Float Pool as an added resource for all nursing units, promoting a positive attitude towards floating. At bi-weekly intervals, one-to-one nursing leadership coaching is provided.

- Using the organization’s system, blended learning is delivered with online academic modules. Furthermore, clinical educators, along with unit preceptors, individualize learning needs and monitor progress while slowing down or speeding up training, as needed. Additional expectations, such as, obtaining a national certification, becoming a part of shared governance, becoming an IV champion, and engaging in evidence based practice projects further empower the new graduate nurse.

Outcomes

Since November 2014, 143 HP nurses have been hired with a retention rate of 97%. Prior to the restructuring, the retention rate was 89.5%. As of October 2016, HP is the only entry point for new graduate nurses, in an effort to create a standardized orientation process to bridge gaps between education and clinical practice. Keeping a pulse on the onboarding progress, while offering ongoing support, is essential to leading the HP to continued success for the organization.

Implications for Practice

The Horizon Nurse Residency Program provides the organization with a structured attempt to recruit and retain new graduate nurses who are engaged and committed to providing safe, quality care. Through a consistent and standardized on-boarding process, the new nurse graduate is able to transition smoothly, effectively and confidently into the nursing profession.

References


