LETTING THE NEWCOMERS IN: THE AGING WORKFORCE BRINGS INNOVATION

Team Leader: Betty Sue Minton, RN, MSN
Vanderbilt University Medical Center, Nashville, Tennessee
Team Member: Michelle Stallings, RN, MBA

The aging of the RN workforce is resulting in an unequal outflow of the labor force. To counter the trend, Vanderbilt Perianesthesia units are participating in the Nurse Residency Program and accepting new graduate nurses.

Objectives included: Assimilate new graduate nurses into the Perianesthesia setting, change culture of existing workforce to acceptance of the novice co-worker and transition new graduate nurses from novice to professional practice.

The Nurse Residency is a combination of classroom and clinical experiences. There is a collaborative effort by nursing leaders, educators, and staff to provide the residents with the guidance and support essential for their success. The first year of their practice includes a systematic process designed to support their needs and the unit practice expectations. The workforce modification also required a cultural change within the unit ensuring the residents received acceptance.

The program has resulted in new graduates requesting PACU as a first job opportunity. It will allow our experienced Care Partners who are in nursing school to obtain jobs in the PACUs upon graduation.

Participation in the Nurse Residency resulted in a cultural shift in the workplace and confirmed our commitment to quality care and advancing the professional practice of new graduates. Nurses entering the workforce will see PACU as a place to gain a sound knowledge base, excellent assessment/observation skills and the ability to think and act quickly.