

Coaching to Climb the Clinical Ladder: Increasing Nurse Engagement in Professional Development Activities in Post-Anesthesia Care Unit



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BACKGROUND

- NYU Langone Orthopedic Hospital has a Professional Development Program (PDP) based on the Magnet Model and designed to recognize, reward, and retain. To be promoted to Clinical Nurse (CN) 3 or CN4, RNs need to build a professional career portfolio of their accomplishments, skills, abilities.
- Studies show RNs' perception of the career ladder system was positively correlated with job satisfaction and negatively correlated with turnover intention.

PROBLEM

During December 2021 to December 2023, 5 PACU RNs were in the PDP as CN3 or CN4 with no new applicants for two years. There was an opportunity to increase the number of eligible PACU RNs in the PDP [e.g., CN3 and CN4].

PURPOSE

To increase the percentage rate of PACU RNs appointed to CN3 or CN4 in the PDP, to reach or exceed a goal of 25% by December 2025. Goal is to have at least 9 RNs in the PDP.

METHOD

- A team of PACU project leads, unit practice council, nurse leaders, and an educator collaborated on this initiative.
- A PDSA cycle approach was used to structure and carry out the project in the PACU.
- Facilitators and barriers to PDP application were identified.
 - Leadership and peer support were identified as common facilitators.
 - Common barriers included time constraints, extensive requirements, and finding supporting evidence for portfolio.
- Strategies to address barriers and promote PDP application were implemented to support staff in the process.
- Data on unit RN PDP application, RN PDP appointment, and RN turnover rate were collected on a quarterly basis.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES



Community with Peer Support and Mentorship

- CN3 and CN4 coach candidates in group engagement of professional development activities and portfolio-building.



Organizational Support

- Leadership communication and support
- Flexible scheduling
- Financial award and compensation
- Unit practice and hospital-wide initiatives

Awareness from Education

- Email distribution
- Library of PDP resources and information
- WeLearn education
- PDP workshops



Continuous Opportunities

- Nursing councils, journal club, continuing education, specialty certification review courses, conferences, fellowship programs, nursing research, wellness, graduate school, etc.

Highlight and Recognize

- Newly promoted CN3 and CN4 are celebrated in unit board, staff meetings, celebratory/education programs, hospital website, newsletter, emails, and group text.

OUTCOMES

- In January 2024, the percentage of PACU CN3 or CN4 is 13.9%. By December 2025, the percentage increased to 33.3%, exceeding our goal.
- Increase from 5 to 11 PACU RNs in PDP.
- No turnover of Clinical Nurse 3 and Clinical Nurse 4 for two years.

IMPLICATIONS

- A collaborative approach to engage PACU RNs in professional development is essential to create a positive healthy work environment that nurses want to grow in, ultimately leading to increase in nursing satisfaction.
- Peer coaches, information sharing, leadership involvement, and nursing recognition are ways to engage RNs in professional development activities that can advance the practice of perianesthesia nursing.
- Continued support is essential to a culture that values professional development.

REFERENCES

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