Evaluation of a Pilot Mentoring Program

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Purpose: This project evaluates a pilot mentoring program on a unit at Swedish Medical Center in Issaquah, WA. The mentoring program evaluation aims to assess outcomes, processes, and explore possible alternatives to reach program goals.

Background/Significance: Most health care organizations struggle with nurse staffing issues related to attrition. One evidence-based method to combat nurse attrition is a mentoring program. Mentoring programs have been demonstrated to increase nurse retention, job satisfaction, and enhance clinical competency. In a time of constant change and nursing shortages, it is vital to keep an experienced, respected, and well-educated nursing workforce. Nurse mentoring programs can be part of that multi-faceted approach to retaining the nurses needed to care for our patients.

Description: The mentorship program involves six charge nurses (3 on day shift and 3 on night shift) assigned to mentor a nurse on the unit based on their shift schedules. Mentors received education on the mentoring program with ideas for topics and questions to discuss with their mentee during. In addition, each mentee was provided education about this opportunity during their yearly evaluation. Mentors are meeting with their mentee once every two months to discuss concerns, goals, and address any questions that they may have. At six months’ all participants will complete an evaluation survey in order to assess program outcomes.

Evaluation and Outcomes: Using a paper/pencil survey, all participating registered nurses will be recruited to complete an evaluation survey six months from the time the mentoring program began. The survey includes Likert scale questions and open-ended questions regarding the outcomes, processes, and experience of participating the mentoring program. The survey aims to evaluate three main topics: 1) the outcomes of the mentoring program which consist of job satisfaction, intent to stay, clinical competency, and developmental goals. 2) the processes of the program such as the quality of program, mentors, communication, and logistics and 3) other alternatives that might facilitate improved ways to meet the program’s goals.

Conclusions: It is expected that the completed evaluation surveys will demonstrate positive outcomes by both mentors and mentees. In addition, information will be obtained that will explore the program’s strengths and weaknesses, facilitating program improvements and possible pilot testing on other hospital units.

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