Predictions point to changes in healthcare related to increased volume and acuity of patients in ambulatory settings. This shift has increased the need for professional nursing services in ambulatory care.

- Promoting Graduate Nurses (GN) interest in ambulatory care through a Nurse Residency program can meet some of these needs.
- GN Residency programs provide the structure and support for new registered professional nurses to develop critical thinking and leadership skills to provide safe and effective patient care.
- The growth of the outpatient clinics in the Medical Group provided an opportunity to integrate GNs into the adult and pediatric ambulatory practice settings.
- Strategies were employed to influence organizational culture change and included design of a comprehensive program to hire, orient, and support the GN.

The selected GN residents for outpatient infusion had backgrounds that helped them in their transition to the fast pace of the outpatient world…

Prior experience in healthcare is beneficial:

- The background knowledge that I had from inpatient…LPN experience…was a blessing. I think it would be very difficult for a graduate nurse that has had no experience…to start in the infusion room. It is a fast paced environment that commands astute assessment skills and time management.

Integration with other Nurse Residents is beneficial:
- Increased awareness of differences in clinical settings.
- Opportunities for EBP projects and improving current policies or procedures

Nurse Resident Reflections

Prior experience in healthcare is beneficial:

- The selected GN residents for outpatient infusion had backgrounds that helped them in their transition to the fast pace of the outpatient world…

Orientation length is an important factor:
- Orientation needs to be a full 12 weeks on the unit. Being here 5 days a week…helps them put the puzzle pieces together.

Outcomes

Evaluations from preceptors and GNs indicate that a structured orientation is necessary to assure the success of the GN in ambulatory settings. GNs that have successfully completed the program are taking leadership roles in safe, effective patient care, and recognized as valued colleagues. The success thus far has led to planned sustainability through budgeted positions for three successive years.

Actions for a Collaborative Team Approach

- The Medical Group’s Chief Administrative Officer obtained the financial support and provided organizational linkages.
- An inpatient immersion experience was included to provide clinical assessment experience with the appropriate patient population. Collaboration among inpatient and outpatient Nurse Educators and Managers provided optimal learning experiences highlighting the continuum of patient care.
- Key to the GN’s transition to practice was consultation with the Nurse Residency Coordinator to identify a plan for integration of ambulatory nurses into the institution’s 12 month Nurse Residency Program. The ambulatory GNs were grouped with nurse resident peers from inpatient settings to share experiences and to complete an evidence based practice project.
- Using existing resources a graduate nurse residency program was developed to create a smooth transition to ambulatory care. Support was provided to the ambulatory staff to accept new graduates in their setting and to learn how to precept a GN.

Findings

- Nurse Resident Reflections
- Prior experience in healthcare is beneficial:
  - “The background knowledge that I had from inpatient…LPN experience…was a blessing. I think it would be very difficult for a graduate nurse that has had no experience…to start in the infusion room. It is a fast paced environment that commands astute assessment skills and time management.”
  - “Increased awareness of differences in clinical settings.”
  - “Opportunities for EBP projects and improving current policies or procedures”

- Preceptor Reflections
  - Prior experience in healthcare is beneficial:
    - “The selected GN residents for outpatient infusion had backgrounds that helped them in their transition to the fast pace of the outpatient world…”
  - Orientation length is an important factor:
    - “Orientation needs to be a full 12 weeks on the unit. Being here 5 days a week…helps them put the puzzle pieces together.”

Nurse Residency Program Structure

12 Month Nurse Residency

- Recruitment Strategies
- Onboarding Activities
- Orientation (General)
- Orientation (Unit Specific)
- Clinical Orientation with Preceptor
- Mentorship
- EBP Project

References


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