

Crossing the Lines: Level 1 Trauma Nursing at its Best!

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BACKGROUND

Care of trauma patients and survival rate are dependent on quality nursing care provided by competent staff. In an effort to advance excellence in trauma nursing, we explored an inventive cross training approach. The Cross Training Program (CTP) was created in the Surgical Intensive Care Unit (SICU) and the Emergency Department (ED) to expand the pool of competent nurses, increase knowledge and skill in both areas, increase quality of care and nurse satisfaction, and provide continuity of care across hospital units to the trauma patient.

PURPOSE & SETTING

The purpose of this presentation is to:

- Describe the development and implementation of an innovative design involving cross training SICU and ED nurses
- The goals of this program are to:

- Expand critical care nursing knowledge and skill
- Improve continuity of care to trauma patients
- Increase the pool of nurses available in these intense environments
- Provide excellence in customer service and care to trauma patients and their families
- Improve the quality of trauma care

Setting:

- Denver Health Medical Center – Level 1 Trauma Center
- 477 – bed urban public safety net hospital
- Implemented in the SICU (20 bed unit) & the ED (37 bed unit)

METHODS

The cross training program was created by the nurse managers and clinical nurse educators in the SICU & ED. The program facilitated nurses to work concurrently in these two departments with the trauma patient population.

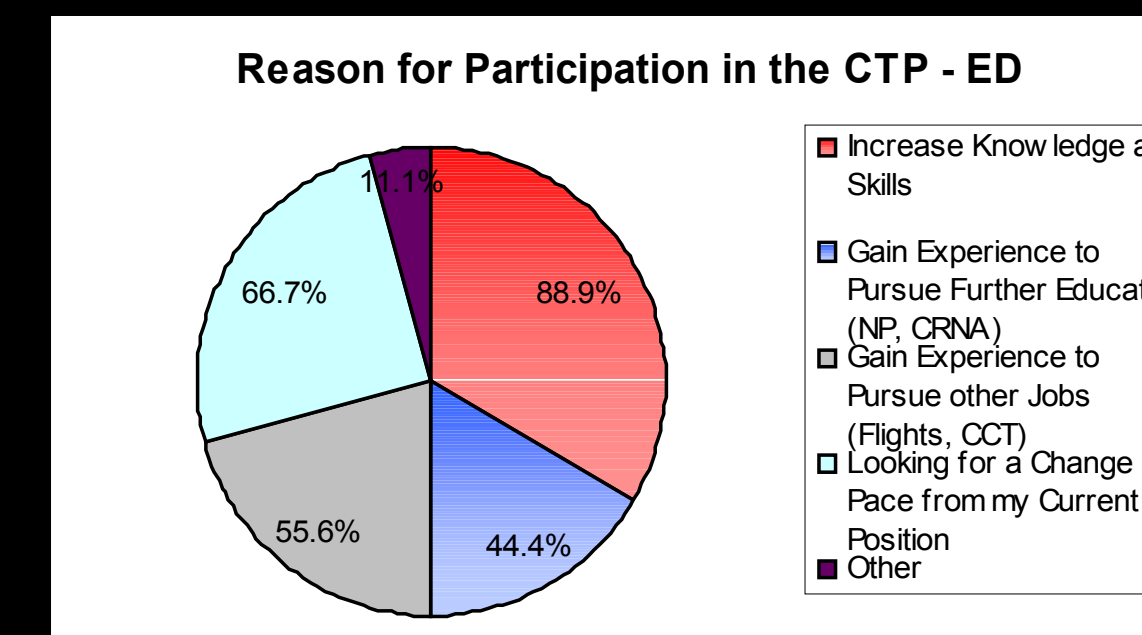
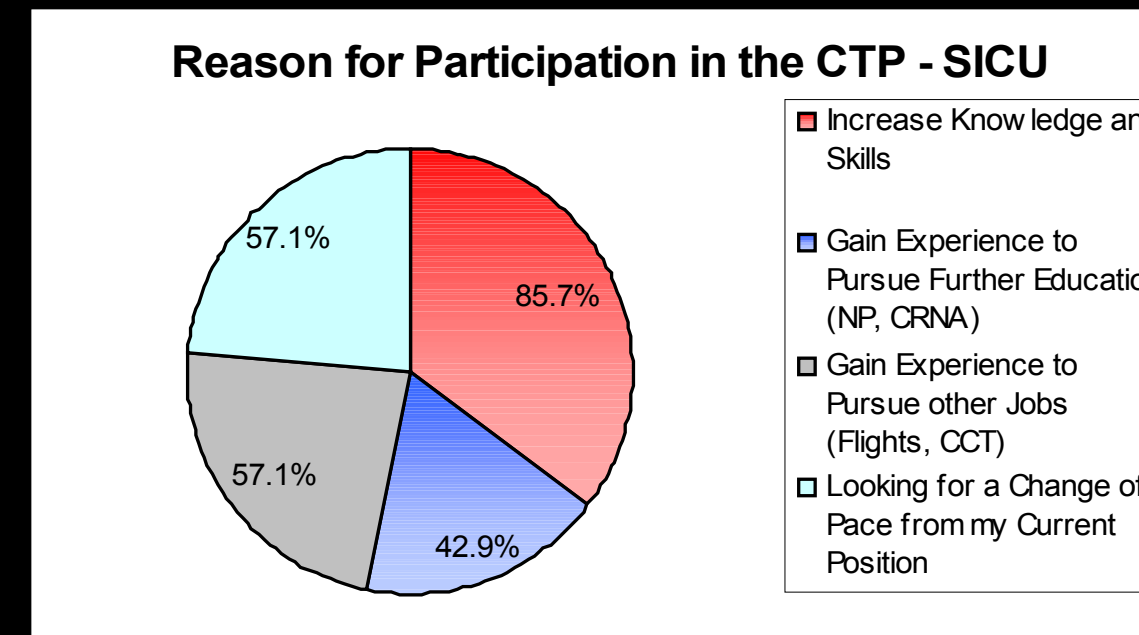
- The didactic training program includes:
 - Critical care course
 - Trauma care course
 - ENPC
 - PALS
 - TNCC
- The clinical program consists of:
 - ED/ SICU nurses spending 12 shifts in their cross training unit with a preceptor orienting to the clinical bedside practices
 - The unit educators follow the training progress in their area and provide mentorship throughout the orientation and after training is completed

Unit staffing budget was not affected: each pair of cross trainers equals 1 FTE per unit

RESULTS

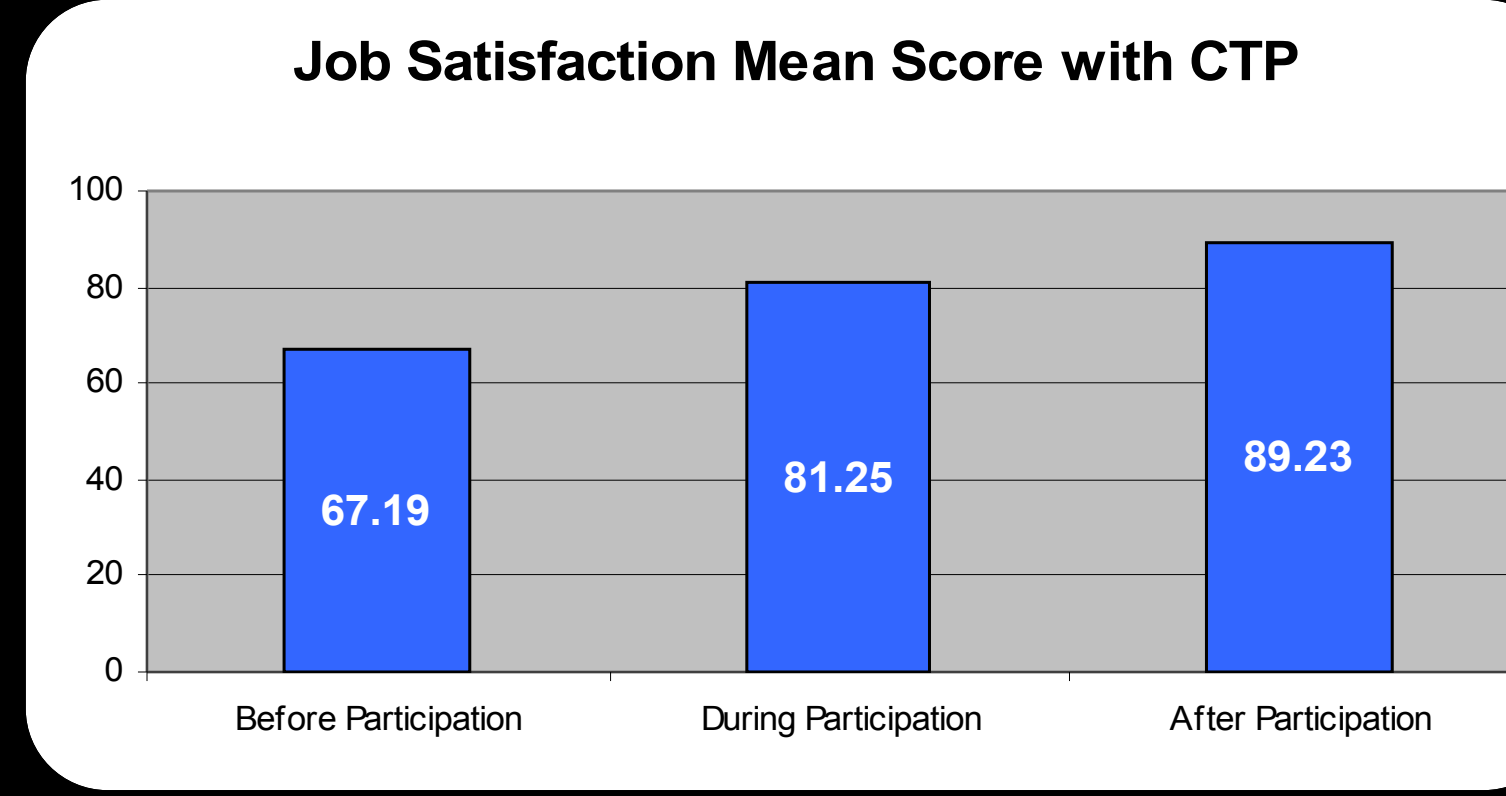
Demographic Data				
Unit		SICU	ED	Total
		n=7	n=9	n=16
		43.8%	56.2%	100.0%
Years in Current Critical Care Unit	2-5 years	57.1%	33.3%	43.8%
	5-8 years	28.6%	66.7%	50.0%
	8-10 years	14.3%	0.0%	6.3%
Years at DHMC	2-5 years	42.9%	44.4%	43.8%
	5-8 years	42.9%	55.6%	50.0%
	8-10 years	14.3%	0.0%	6.3%
Years as a Cross Trained RN	< 1 year	14.3%	22.2%	18.8%
	1 year	57.1%	22.2%	37.5%
	> 1 year	0.0%	44.4%	25.0%
	> 2 year	28.6%	11.1%	18.8%
Nursing Certifications Currently Held				
Trauma Nursing Core Course	TNCC	85.7%	100.0%	93.8%
Emergency Nursing Pediatric Course	ENPC	14.3%	88.9%	56.3%
Advanced Cardiac Life Support	ACLS	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Pediatric Advanced Life Support	PALS	42.9%	66.7%	56.3%
Certified Emergency Nurse	CEN	0.0%	44.4%	25.0%
Certification in Critical Care Nursing	CCRN	14.3%	11.1%	12.5%
Advanced Trauma Life Support	ATLS	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Other	0.0%	22.2%	12.6%

*A registered service mark of AACN Certification Corporation denoting certification in critical care nursing



Anecdotal Comments

- "Positively impacts the camaraderie between the ED and the SICU."
- "It furthered my critical thinking skills in emergent situations."
- "I gained a better idea of patient flow through the hospital."
- "This program has increased my comfort level with very ill patients immensely, and expanded my skill set as a nurse."
- "Having the opportunity to create new working relationships with the staff and physicians in another area was great. This allows for one department to gain appreciation for what the other department does/experiences."
- "I would not be here if it was not for the cross training program. The program was the major influence in my nursing career."
- "This program builds stronger, more proficient and knowledgeable RNs."



Financial Impact	
• Estimated Cost Savings for 2006-2009:	
• Cross trained SICU nurses floated on 23 different occasions (23 – 12-hour shifts)	
• Average agency nurse cost is \$56 / hour	
• For 23 - 12-hour shifts cost savings = \$15,456	
• Further cost analysis in the ED is ongoing	



OUTCOMES

Data collection reveals several positive outcomes including:

- Improved knowledge and skill of the nurses in both departments that translated into improved care for the patient
- Increased job satisfaction
- Improved communication and camaraderie between the two units
- Extended staffing options for both units
- Increased experience level of nurses allowing expanded options for future career advancement

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The Cross Training Program at DHMC provides didactic and clinical instruction in two critical care areas to improve quality and continuity of care for trauma patients. Engaging staff nurses in inventive strategies to advance nursing practice enriches quality improvement, provides a holistic view of the patient experience in these two intense environments, and sustains job satisfaction.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- Consideration of expansion to other critical care settings
- Implementation of pre and post testing
- Reduce scheduling difficulties through a revised orientation schedule incorporating the American Association of Critical Care Nurse's (AACN) Essentials of Critical Care Orientation
- Improve preceptor recognition; as they are pivotal in the success of the participating cross trainers
- Formalize the process for entering the program to minimize wait time

ED/ SICU CROSS TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

1. The ED/ SICU cross training program is open to all nurses who are currently employed by the program to work in the ED and SICU units, who are not currently employed in either unit.
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