

Implementing a Night Shift Clinical Nurse Specialist



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BACKGROUND

Research supports that healthcare staff face many more challenges during the night shift than their colleagues. Night shift staff tends to be newer with less experience and fewer resources. Numerous studies have demonstrated an increase in errors and stress during night shift. Off-shift workers also experience heightened feelings of isolation due to a lack of leadership presence and communication. A 2006 article in Nursing Management even speculated that creating a night educator role could improve such statistics.

York Hospital's night shift clinical nurse specialist (CNS) was created as just such a resource. Since 2007, the CNS has addressed all three spheres of influence by providing real-time consultation, education, and clinical skills specifically to the newest and least resourced of the healthcare staff. The CNS also assists with rapid response, code team, trauma, and general staffing where needed to improve patient care and outcomes.

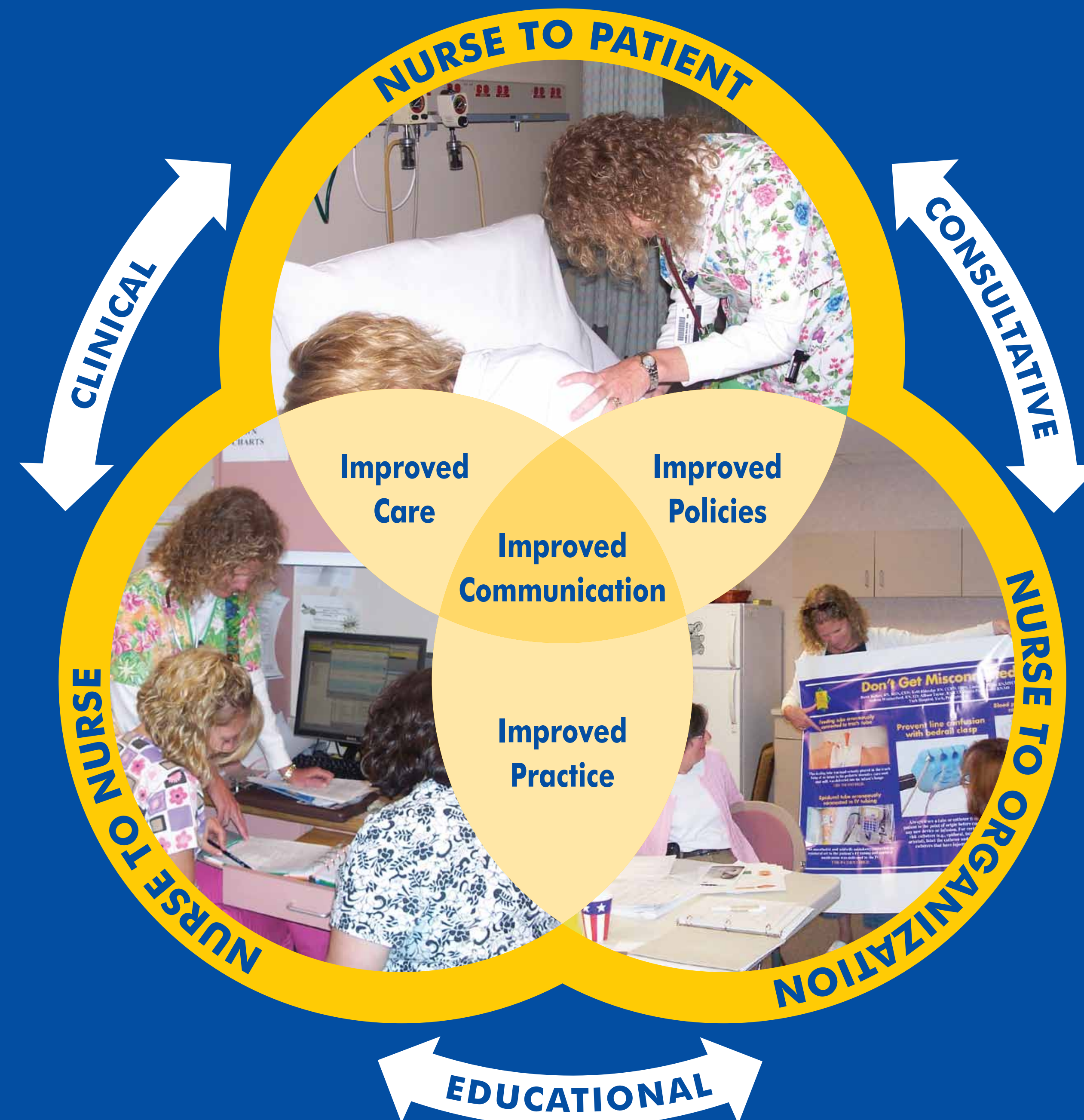
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CNS Spheres of Influence



OUTCOMES

Before the new night shift CNS:

- 90% of night shift staff felt little or no support
- 100% of committees and most hospital-wide education occurred routinely on days
- No clinical nurse specialists on campus during night hours

Since the new night shift CNS:

- 86% of night shift staff is very satisfied with the new resource
- New communication committee includes a representative from every hospital unit and provides off-shift staff with more timely information
- Night shift RNs now have a voice on practice and education councils through CNS
- On average annually, over 280 educational opportunities conducted for night shift individuals and units to improve patient care and nursing practice
- On average annually, over 180 clinical assistance calls
- On average annually, over 160 nursing consults conducted
- On average annually, over 200 patients resuscitated or stabilized on night shift through CNS intervention

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