

Boosting RN Retention on an Inpatient Oncology Unit

Sharon Hanchett RN,BSN,OCN, Lorraine Cherian RN, BSN,OCN,
Sara Orndoff RN,OCN
UPMC Shadyside, 7 West

Project Goal

To retain trained and experienced RN's on the Stem Cell Transplant Unit.

Overview

In 2008 36% of bedside RN's separated from 7 West. The majority left to work in outpatient hematology/oncology and SCT clinics. SCT nursing requires chemotherapy certification, courses in oncology foundations and SCT courses to be taken during orientation along with clinical orientation to the unit for a **minimum** of 6 weeks by a preceptor. This process is time consuming for the preceptors and costly for the unit mentally and financially.

This patient population is highly susceptible to life threatening complications, including graft vs. host disease, prolonged neutropenia, and severe infections. Therefore, it is imperative that our staff be experienced and engaged. We reviewed the literature and surveyed remaining staff members to come up with a plan.

- Mentoring program established through funding from a Beckwith Grant
- Good Grief Sessions initiated monthly for staff
- Continuing education credits offered through monthly journal club and mentoring program
- Based on staff survey results, utilized our large Weekend Program (8 positions) and influx of new staff to make a radical scheduling change.

As a result our separation rate dropped to 7.6% in 2009 and three months into 2010 we have lost 0 RN's! RN Separation Rate = # of RN's who quit/avg # of staff nurses. (Gess, 2008)

From this project we learned that scheduling, continuing education opportunities, and access to effective coping strategies are important in retaining experienced RN's.

Baseline Data

Separation Rate: 36%

Why do nurses prefer outpatient?

Preferred hours: M-F, no weekends, no holidays, better patient outcomes

When did they leave inpatient?

Experience ranged from 1.7 to 20 yrs

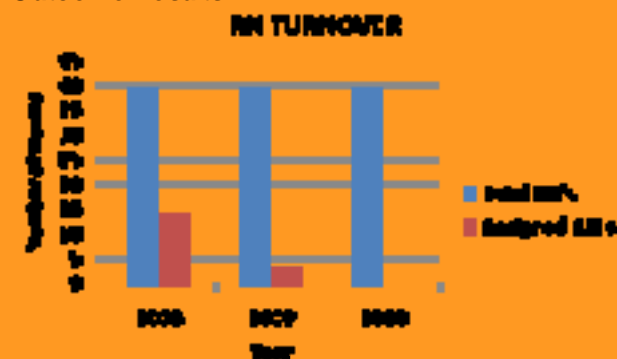
Quality of Care in 2008?

- CLAB rate: 9
- Medication errors: 26
- Press Ganey: 92.9
- Unit morale: poor

Implementation Timeline

- 2/08** - Unit Professional Practice Council formed
- 10/08** - Scheduling committee subgroup formed from 7W Professional Practice Council
- Monthly Journal Club with CE's
- 1/09** - 2 years no weekends program initiated
- Autonomous scheduling practices
- Monthly Good Grief Center programs initiated
- 4/09** - Oncology Nurse Mentoring Program Initiated

Outcome Results



Where we are now:

- CLAB Rates 09: 5 (9)
- Medication Errors: 22 (26)
- Press Ganey: 93.7 (92.9)
- Separation Rate: 7.6% (36%)
- Unit morale: GREAT!

Where we are going 2010:

- Separation rate 2010: 0%!
- Reapplying for grant to fund oncology mentoring program
- 7W selected to participate in caregiver distress creative writing workshop
- Project: Improving clinical partnerships with our designated ICU.

Conclusions

- Schedule, Continuing Education Opportunities, mentoring programs and accessibility of tangible coping mechanisms are important to new RN's and seasoned RN's alike
- Having an attainable incentive for new RN's to work towards and recognition of experienced RN's is crucial
- Seasoned RN's feel empowered and rewarded for the time and hard work they have committed to 7 West

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