The Power of Peer Review: Impacting Practice at the Bedside

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Objectives

• To describe the components of implementing the nursing peer review process in a hospital setting.

• Identify opportunities for nursing practice changes and improved patient outcomes through the nursing peer review process.

Nursing Peer Review Definition

Nursing peer review is an evaluation of professional nursing practice, including identification of opportunities to improve care, by individuals with the appropriate subject matter expertise to perform this evaluation.

(Harrington & Smith, 2008)

Historical Perspective

System level review of cases referred
  • CNS review of case
  • If formal review held, it would be from an uninvolved 'like' unit from a different facility
  • Only 2-3 cases per year referred
  • Demonstrated dissatisfaction with process

Shared governance raised concerns
  • What is best practice for peer review?
  • How can we encourage ownership of nurses for their own practice?
  • Thus a system wide task force was established to research and revamp our process

Staff Empowerment

• Nursing Peer Review (NPR) engages the bedside nurse to be empowered to make nursing practice changes based on the peer review findings.

• In order to increase participation and ownership at the unit level, it was necessary to develop a consistent nursing peer review structure and process.

WellStar Health System

• Not-For-Profit Five Hospital System
  • 1201 Beds
  • 100-bed Nursing Home
  • 6 Urgent Care Centers
  • 14 Imaging Centers
  • Residential Hospice
  • Assisted Living
  • Home Care

• WellStar Kennestone Hospital Level II Trauma Center

• 400+ Multispecialty Physicians Group

• 1.2 Million Office Visits/year

• 62,000+ Admissions/year

• 10,000+ Deliveries/year

• 900 Non-Employed Medical Staff

• 12,298 Employees

• Revenues > $1 Billion
Research and Development

Literature Review
- Very little in the literature about nursing peer review

Program Development
- Identified Committee Membership
- Outlined the Review Process
- Developed the Tools
- Developed policy for NPR
- Developed NPR model

Program Implementation & Evaluation
- Implemented in all 15 facilities
- Structure varies based on size of facility and resources
- Data collection on outcomes from cases

Nursing Peer Review Model

Care/Team Review
- Outlined the Review Process
- Developed the Tools
- Developed policy for NPR

WellStar Nursing Peer Review
- Clinical Advancement Program
- Peer-to-Peer Feedback
- Shared Governance Structure

Purpose of NPRC

- Nursing Peer Review Committee (NPRC) in a non-punitive manner, identify and communicate
  - Nursing-related patient care concerns using a standardized process
  - Process for identifying issues deserving intense analysis
  - Educational opportunities

Conducting case reviews
NURSING PEER REVIEW COMMITTEE (NPRC)

Goals of Nursing Peer Review

- Identify opportunities for improvements in practice
- Identify barriers impacting patient care
- Enhance nursing performance
- Improve outcomes

Committee (NPRC) Structure

Manager/Responsibility
- Ensures staff participation in review
- Implementation of action plan
- Follow-up monitoring required
- Disciplinary action is taken prior to peer review

Team Leadership
- Collaboratively led by staff nurse and/or other nursing leader
- All team members are reviewed by the committee as deemed appropriate
- Quarterly Collaborative Nursing Team Meetings
- Includes identified staff nurse representatives (spokesperson) and staff involved in the incident/care of the patient

Team Structure
- Membership is based on similar practice areas
- Participating staff are selected by their nurse manager
- Three 12-month terms rolling off incrementally to avoid having 100% turnover
- Final goal is to have 25% of membership in the hospital at any given time
### Kennestone Hospital's (633 beds) NPRC Team Structure

**Teams**
- 3N
- 3W
- 3W ext.
- 4N
- IMCU
- 5B/CCU
- 3B/CVICU

**Facilitation**
- Collaboratively led by staff RNs and APNs for the specialty areas
- Regular monthly meetings scheduled
  - Cancelled if no case to review
  - Appropriate team is assembled for each case

### Douglas Hospital's (108 beds) NPRC Team Structure

**Teams**
- Critical Care
  - 8 bed ICU
- Acute Care
  - 4 acute care units
- Women's Services
  - LDRP

**Facilitation**
- Led by the unit based educators
- Cases often cross between specialty areas so teams are combined as needed based on what areas are impacted
- "Stat" RNs participation is key as they respond to rapid response calls and travel throughout the hospital

### Windy Hill Hospital's (55 beds) NPRC Team Structure

**Team**
- Long Term Acute Care (LTAC)
- Surgical Services

**Facilitation**
- Led by the facility's PI/Accreditation Coordinator (MSN)
- Only 2 practice areas are at WHH, thus they have 1 team with both areas represented
- Promotes teamwork between departments

### CASE REVIEW PROCESS AND TOOLS

Process and tools are consistent across the organization

### Nursing Peer Review Process

- Referrals may be communicated to facility NPRC Coordinator by submitting referral form via email or hard copy to NPRC
- Case referral process - multiple avenues
  - Incident reporting through risk management
  - Medical Staff
  - Anonymous
  - Staff
  - Nurse Leaders
  - Patients & Families

### Nursing Peer Review Process & Decision Tree

- Step-by-step process
- Defines the process for peer review to ensure consistency
- Provides framework to screen for appropriateness of case review
Nursing Peer Review Process

- Initial Review
  - Use Case Review Form
    - SBAR format used to assist staff with the initial review of the referred case includes
      - Alteration in the nursing process
      - What caused the alteration?
      - Adequacy of documentation
      - Contributing factors
      - Determination if the alteration caused harm to the patient
      - Recommendations

Acknowledgement Letter

- Sent to referring individual to acknowledge the case referral to nursing peer review
- When the case isn’t appropriate, it provides feedback as to why and helps to decrease inappropriate referrals

Team Review

- Committee Review Process
- Leader presents case for team discussion using review form
- Identifies issues with
  - Standards of care
  - Knowledge deficit
  - Critical thinking
  - Communication
  - Policy compliance
- Documentation
- Overall nursing care
- Also documents follow-up, unit action plan & exemplary nominations

Nursing Peer Review Communication

- Lessons Learned are shared by committee in shared governance meetings at unit, facility and system levels
- Case summary of de-identified findings & “lessons learned”

What have we found?

FINDINGS

Referrals

- 35 of 48 total referred cases were formally team reviewed
- Reasons the cases were not reviewed
  - Management and/or Disciplinary issues
Nursing Practice Changes

- Hand-off communication
  - Several projects have been completed
  - Process for direct ICU admissions via ED
- Direct physician contact for rapid declining patients
- Dilaudid dosing decreased and warning messages added to pyxis and eMAR
- Blanket warmer for acute care units
- Obstetrical/Neonatal Emergencies
  - Neonatal equipment for ED
  - Simulation/Critical event training with participation from EMS, ED, L&D and NICU
  - Development of an OB/Neonatal response team

Impact of Nursing Peer Review

- NPR model promotes both empowerment as well as ownership/accountability for their nursing practice
  - Gives nurses an avenue where it is possible to step up and address issues to improve nursing practice and patient outcomes
  - Help nurses initiate changes in nursing policy directly related to the outcomes from case reviews
  - Promotes a positive outlook with processes and outcomes
- Creates an environment/culture where the Status Quo is unacceptable and questioned

Future of Nursing Peer Review

- Increase number of Case Reviews completed each year
- Further expand staff nurse committee involvement in ownership of conducting reviews and following through on action items
- Continue to look for more practice improvement recommendations from case reviews
- Wider audience presentations- unit level meetings, off-shift staff, multi-disciplinary forums
Questions and Contact Information

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