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Purpose

The Northwestern Lake Forest Hospital (NLFH) Clinical Nursing Professional Development L.A.D.D.E.R. (Leadership, Achievement, Development, Dedication, Education, Recognition) was designed:

- To provide a clinical career advancement system for direct-care registered nurses focused on improving the hospital's culture of safety
- To recognize and reward clinical expertise and professional accomplishment.

Setting

NLFH is a 201-bed suburban community hospital which received Magnet recognition in 2010 and was awarded a Leapfrog Hospital Safety Score of "A" in 2012.

Significance

Through this innovative professional development process, direct-care nurses are empowered to identify potential safety issues and implement strategies to enhance the hospital culture of safety. The process has been linked to retention of nurses, and utilization of evidence to improve safety in the environment of care.

Strategy

A chartered improvement team appraised, analyzed and applied the ANA Scope and Standards of Practice, Patricia Benner's Novice to Expert theory, and the Relationship-Based Care @model, resulting in the creation and implementation of the Nursing Professional Development L.A.D.D.E.R. program.

A key component of this process is the use of masters-prepared nurse mentors (many of whom are Clinical Nurse Specialists) to promote and oversee the program, and support applicants in an evidence-based or research project related to patient safety.

Implementation

- Potential direct-care nurse candidates complete an application which includes a personal professional development plan and identification of a director-approved project aimed at improvement of care and safety of patients within the hospital or community.
- Working within the structure of the Nursing Professional Leadership Council, the plan is reviewed, approved and a nurse mentor is assigned to the candidate.
- Upon successful completion of the project, the candidate disseminates information on the project and its outcomes to members of the shared governance council and invited guests, and through posters, publication, or podium presentations to professional groups as indicated.
- Nurses are awarded a certificate of recognition and a monetary bonus by the CNO and are acknowledged in a unit celebration with their managers and peers.
- L.A.D.D.E.R. projects become the responsibility of the director sponsor to assure that it is sustained and incorporated into the culture of safety.

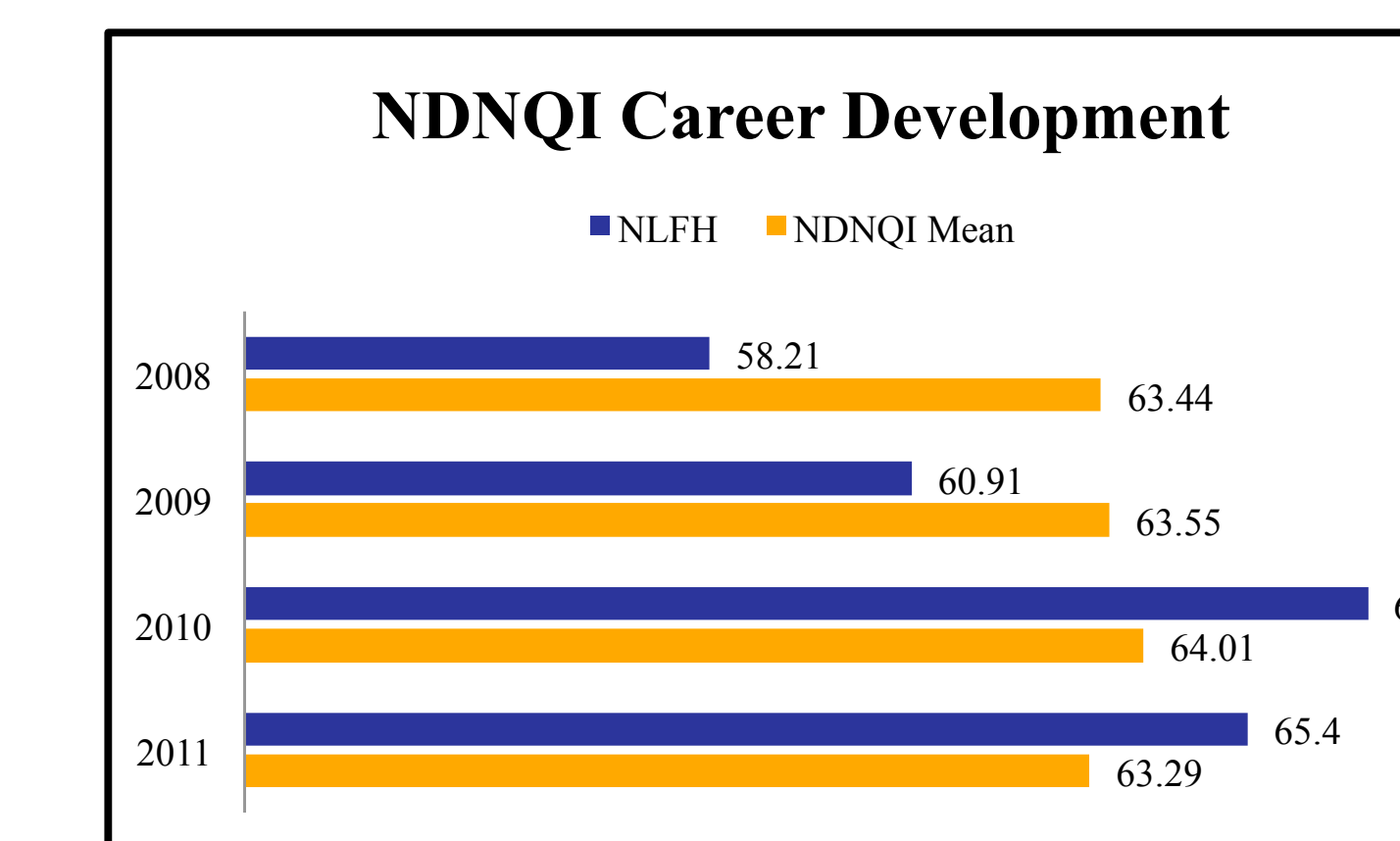
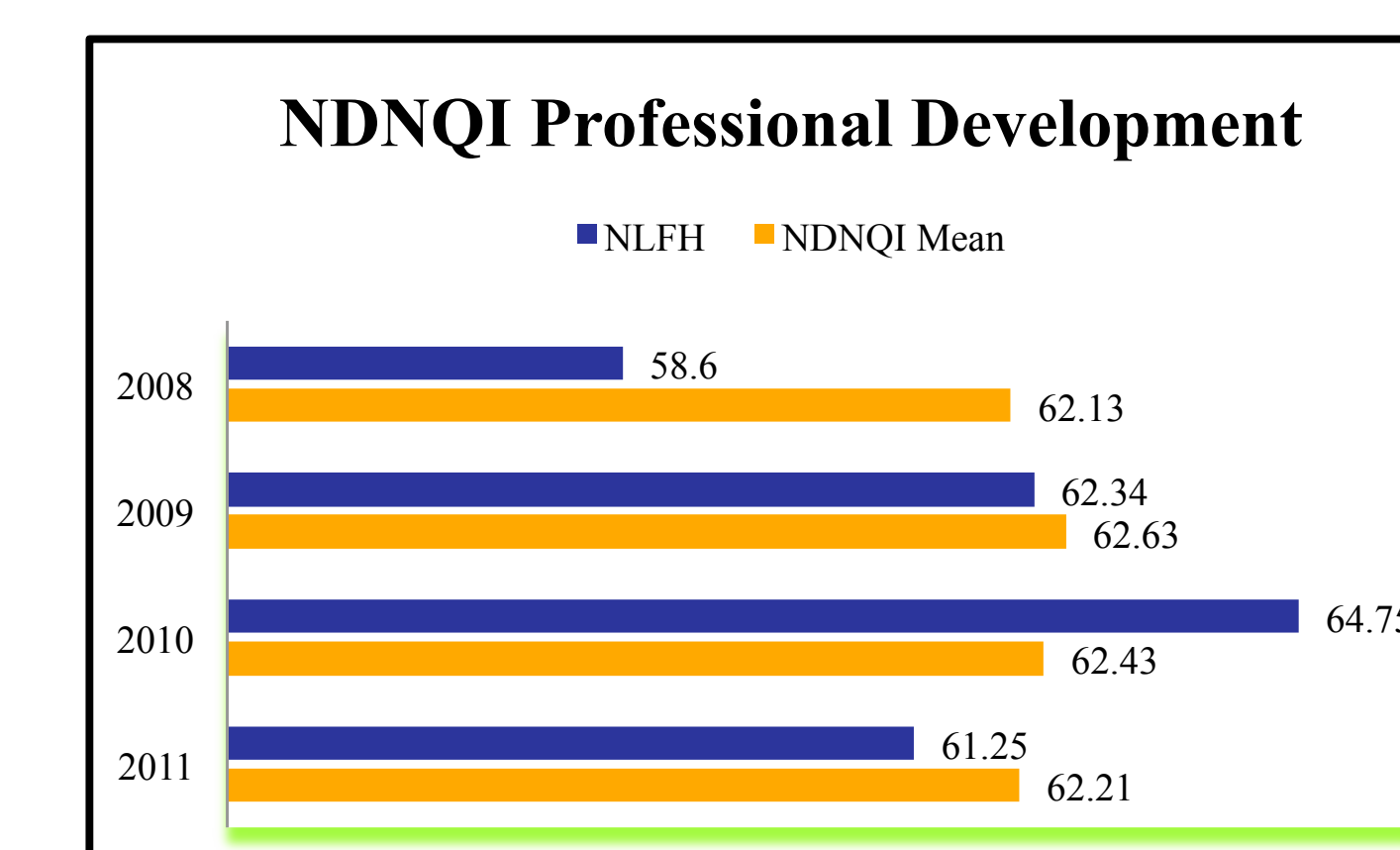
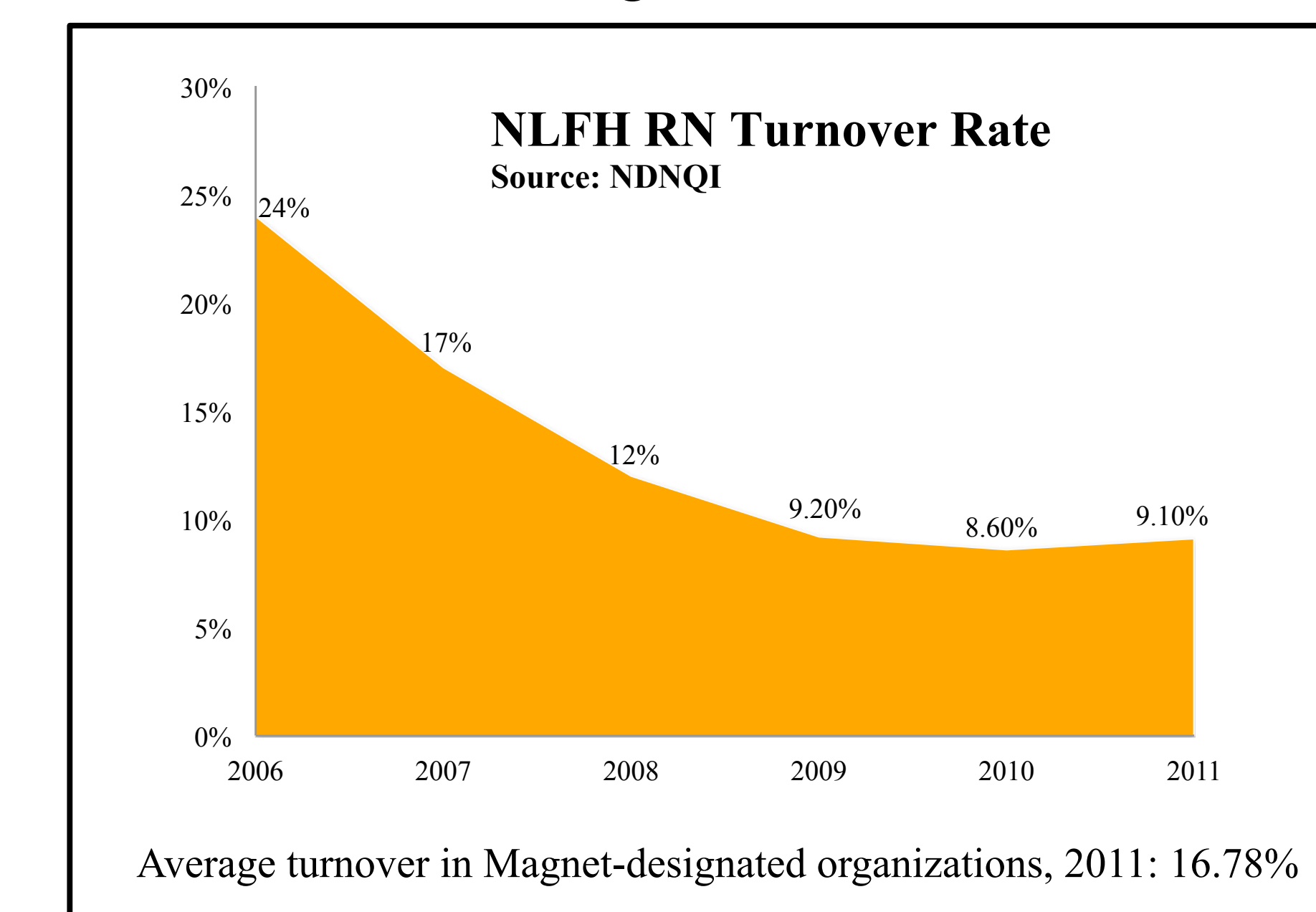
Role of the Masters-Prepared Nurse Mentor

- Works with the candidate to develop a project time table to assure completion within 18 months
- Assists with navigation of the complexities of effecting organizational change
- Supports the candidate in the steps of evidence-based practice change, identification of outcomes, and mechanisms for measurement of outcomes
- Monitors progress and supports the candidate with any possible challenges encountered



Evaluation

Eighteen patient safety initiatives have been implemented in thirteen nursing care units since 2008.



Implications for Practice

The clinical expertise of direct-care nurses is essential in development and implementation of strategies to improve patient safety. A clinical advancement process can be an effective tool to mentor nurses to develop evidence-based interventions to improve quality outcomes for patients. Examples of projects developed by nurses within the NLFH Clinical Nursing Professional Development L.A.D.D.E.R. include:

- Nursing Care of the Cardiac Catheterization Patient
Patricia Alex, RN, CCRN
- Patient Positioning in the OR to Reduce Complications
Loretta Hansen, BS, RN
- Identification of Patients in CP Rehab Who Are At High Risk For Depression
Karen Kreiner, BSN, RN-BC (CV Nursing)
- Increasing Safety of Patients Undergoing Moderate Sedation
Nancy Nozicka, BSN, RN, CEN
- Development of Guidelines for Managing Patients with Diabetes in CP Rehab
Ellen Persak Leach, BSN, RN
- Development of Hypothermia After Cardiac Arrest Protocol
Mary Thottathil, RN, CCRN