



### ABOUT CHRISTIANA CARE

Christiana Care Health System (CCHS) is one of the country's largest health care providers, serving more than 600,000 patients yearly, placing it as the 22nd leading hospital in the nation. Christiana Care includes two hospitals with 1,100 patient beds, a home health care service, preventive medicine, rehabilitation services, a network of primary care physicians and an extensive range of outpatient services.

### ABSTRACT

#### Purpose

To provide a passageway that fosters the development of critical thinking skills and nurse competence, promotes leadership thinking and nursing excellence, and facilitates a smooth transition to the organization's culture.

#### Relevance / Significance

At a time of high patient acuity and complex care delivery, new nurses are entering an environment with many stressors and demands. In addition to attempting to successfully adapt to working on a different unit every four weeks, novice nurses face an overwhelming list of milestones that they are expected to accomplish in their first year of practice. If nurses are mandated to float from unit to unit, it is essential they are supported and competent in the areas to which they are assigned.

#### Strategy / Implementation

This program focuses on the nurse graduating from the Medical Nurse Residency Program, transferring into the Medical Nurse Float Pool. Leadership approval was obtained pre-implementation. Nurse Managers and Staff Development Specialists offered suggestions for program content. Program curriculum was developed based on Patricia Benner's Novice to Expert model, focusing on quality outcomes, evidence-based practice, patient safety, and development of leadership skills. A learning needs assessment is administered. Curriculum is implemented through monthly structured classes, which include interactive teaching methods, content customized to the unique needs of float pool nurses, and reflection to facilitate learning from practice. Monthly staff meetings are held to ensure nurses are informed on current organizational information. Time is set aside for discussions about patient care situations which serves as a vehicle to enhance socialization as well as reflect on clinical practice.

#### Evaluation

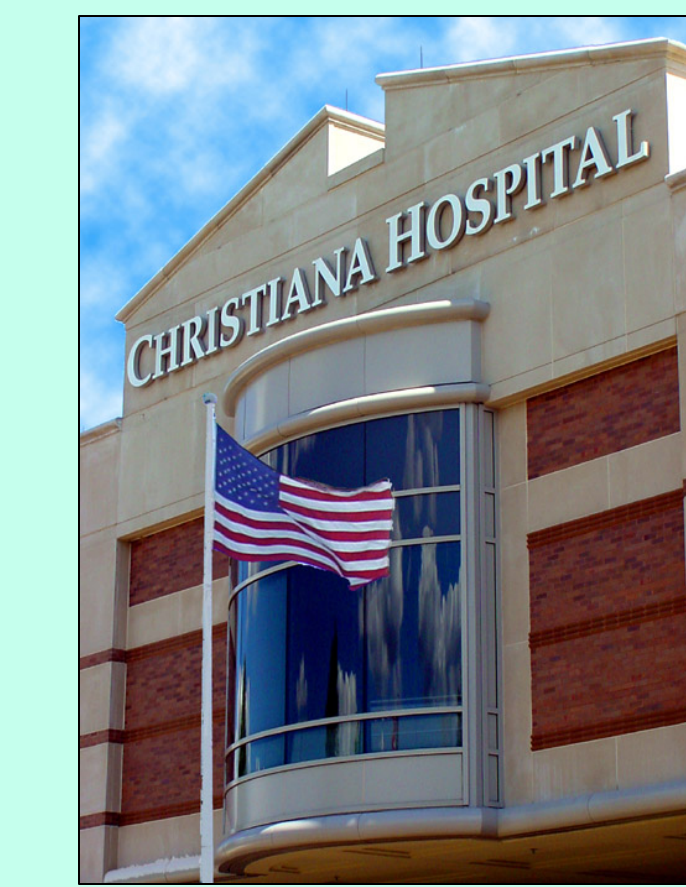
Eighteen nurses successfully transitioned from the float pool since 2011. Of those 18, 15 have remained on medical units. Two are current chairs of unit based Shared Decision Making Councils and eight are members of unit and/or system-wide councils. Seven have returned to school or obtained a MSN. Four obtained professional certification. Success is attributed to clinical guidance and mentoring.

#### Implication for Practice

The program establishes clinical competency, offers provision of a support group during the transition of novice to competent nurse, and facilitates retention of skilled nurses. Clinical competence and management of multiple transitions effect the care of patients, the organization, and the new nurse.

# Supporting the Learning and Transition Needs of Novice Registered Nurses in a Float Pool

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### PROBLEM

- ❖ Christiana Care Health System utilizes a float pool of novice registered nurses who are assigned to a medical unit on an as needed basis for four weeks at a time
- ❖ Orientation for the Medical Nurse Float Pool nurses consists of the 16-week Medical Nurse Residency Program
- ❖ The nurses are assigned to units within their clinical specialty; however, as new nurses they are at risk for feeling incompetent, insecure, and alienated
- ❖ The need exists for management of the float pool to ensure development of competence with patient care practices, support of a group, and provision of a solid foundation in nursing skills to guarantee safe and quality patient care

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

#### Adult Learning – David Kolb

- ❖ With every new experience, learners possess ability to be taught something and increase their knowledge base

#### Novice to Expert – Patricia Benner

- ❖ Nurses move along the continuum from novice to expert as they encounter new and different experiences

### SIGNIFICANCE

#### Social Impact

- ❖ To assure the hospital's survival, the impending shortage of registered nurses require that new nurses are prepared to function safely
- ❖ The opportunity to network with peers offered by this program enhances the nurses' ability to problem-solve and manage work-related stressors

#### Economic Impact

- ❖ Investing in educating nurses through this program offers important value-added preparation that will result in retention of this new group of nurses, thus decreasing turnover and cost to the organization

#### Ethical Impact

- ❖ Transitioning from new nurse to professional nurse in today's healthcare environment is a stressful experience, and being a nurse who floats from unit to unit adds additional stressors
- ❖ Enhanced nursing education during the transition facilitates provision of safe, quality, patient and family centered care

#### Political and Legal Impact

- ❖ The Joint Commission, American Nurses' Association, and National Council of State Boards of Nursing all propose supporting nurses during the first year of practice through transition programs

### PLAN

#### Leadership support obtained

#### Class dates and locations confirmed

- ❖ Four hour class every four weeks

#### Program curriculum planned

- ❖ Incorporate didactic, leadership, and clinical components to support development beyond clinical skills, thereby enhancing clinical judgment and critical thinking during the transition from novice to competent nurse
- ❖ Focus on quality outcomes, evidence-based practice, patient safety, leadership skills, and professional development
- ❖ Based on understanding the needs of the novice nurse using Benner's model
- ❖ Strategies include questioning, simulation, and establishing relationships between events

#### Program continues for 12 months following completion of the 16-week Medical Nurse Residency Program

### EVALUATION

#### On-going communication with Nurse Managers and Staff Development Specialists

#### Evaluation tools at end of program

- ❖ Nurse Manager Program Evaluation Tool
- ❖ Float Pool Nurse Evaluation Tool

#### Retention data every 12 months

#### Monitor nurses' ongoing performance after first year of practice

- ❖ Annual performance reviews
- ❖ Continuing education accomplishments
- ❖ Professional advancement
- ❖ Contribution to medical nursing service's development

### CONCLUSION

**As a result of this program, the medical nursing units gain experienced bedside nurses who are prepared to become leaders and are committed to the organization, which inevitably leads to quality patient and family centered care and positive patient outcomes.**

### RECOMMENDATIONS

#### It is recommended that this program receives ongoing administrative support for the following reasons:

- ❖ The variety of clinical experiences make the Medical Nurse Float Pool nurses more valuable members of the healthcare team
- ❖ Nurse managers gain a staffing solution in times of need
- ❖ Medical units are staffed with clinically strong float nurses
- ❖ Competent bedside nurses provide quality patient and family centered care, which leads to excellent patient experiences and positive patient outcomes

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