

BACKGROUND

Orientation stakeholders at a rural hospital acknowledged that current orientation processes were not accomplishing the goal of preparing new RNs for autonomous practice on two busy medical-surgical units.

The authors needed to assess the current state and designed a phenomenological study to establish a valid baseline for change.



METHOD

After review of the literature, we determined an interview-based study using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis would be ideal.

Two study groups were identified—new nurses and preceptors from 2014.

Following IRB approval, volunteers were interviewed face-to-face in a neutral setting using semi-structured interviews which were then transcribed and anonymized.

Transcripts were analyzed by four independent reviewers. Themes were coded and cross-checked for intercoder agreement.

RESULTS

Four Major Preceptor Themes Were Identified

Preceptors are enthusiastic about working with new nurses

“I love it; I absolutely love it! I like teaching new nurses; I like getting to know new people and getting them into our community and introducing them to everybody so they can ultimately understand.”

“I like being able to share what I have learned and it is good to pay back for those who helped you.”

Lack of communication about many aspects of the orientation process

“(Preceptors are chosen) randomly, not very well. When I was asked to be a preceptor, I was like ‘What?’”

“I’m out walking on the floor and say ‘Hi.’ I know nothing about you; nothing about your learning style; nothing about your education; where do you feel comfortable; where don’t you feel comfortable.”

Lack of training, resources, and support

“It would be nice if there was some training...so you would have (preceptors) who know what they are doing.”

“I guess it would be nice to have an outline of what they expect about what the new nurse is (expected) to do when they are done (with) orientation.”

Lack of program methodology/benchmarks

“There is nothing set as to what we should be doing.”

“I kind of have my own little module that I like to follow.”

“I know (they are ready to be on their own) when I feel confident in their abilities.”



CONCLUSIONS

Qualitative research using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was an effective way to explore the lived experience of preceptors as they participated in the orientation process.

Interview analysis provided site-specific information and helped establish an evidence-based starting point for our re-envisioned orientation program.

IPA could be a valuable tool to determine locally valid data to shape the underpinnings of sustainable unit-based change.



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