

Preparing Professional Preceptors

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Historically preceptors were chosen based on knowledge, experience, and number of years in nursing. Many Registered Nurses (RN) were assigned this extra responsibility without having a true desire to be a preceptor or without having formal training. The current health care demands require nurses to be adaptable and innovative at improving professional practice which impacts patient outcomes and the retention of nurses. Quality preceptors are important for ensuring adequate and competent staff which contributes to a safe environment for patients and nurses. The MetroHealth System's Nursing Education and Professional Development Department offers a formal preceptor program. This training supports and cultivates a work environment that allows preceptors to meet the demands of their roles as educators. A formal application process, two day workshop, simulation and continual professional development opportunities were implemented to support the preceptor program. Continuing education contact hours are awarded for attending the training. A standardized preceptor program was implemented in 2009 which directly influences the new graduate RN or newly hired experienced RN's competency level and desire to stay at The MetroHealth System.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Preceptors are part of the clinical ladder program
 Minimum requirements for applicants are:

- BSN or enrolled in BSN program
- 2 years clinical experience
- Endorsement by nurse manager
- Approved by the Director of Nursing
- At least 3 peer evaluations

Applications are reviewed by the Professional Development Council. The Council approves applications based on requirements. Applicants not meeting requirements are encouraged to reapply when qualified. All applicants re-apply every 2 years.



PROFESSIONAL PRECEPTOR BENEFITS

- Increased hourly wage while precepting
- Professional support and development
- Ability to participate in multi-disciplinary staff training
- Nursing contact hours for Preceptor Workshop (6.75) and Simulation Instructor Training (5.5)

TRAINING

Once an applicant is approved, they are required to attend an 8 hour Preceptor workshop which consists of the following topics:

- Professional Attributes
- Roles/Responsibilities
- Novice to Expert
- Professional Socialization
- Hospital Orientation
- Nursing Department Orientation
- Precepting Phases
- Documentation
- Writing Goals
- Learning Styles
- Critical Thinking
- Generation Traits
- Feedback/Communication
- Lateral Violence
- Coaching Strategies for Common Problems

The new preceptor is also required to attend a 2 hour skills validation session where they are competency tested on a variety of unit specific skills.

Following the skills validation, a required 5.5 hour simulation concepts and practice session is attended. This session consists of the following topics:

- Planning and execution of simulations
- Practice simulation
- Scenario design/principles and models
- Debriefing, evaluations, feedback

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A requirement of being a preceptor in the clinical ladder program is to attend two of the four quarterly meetings that are offered. At two of the meetings a contact hour is offered. Preceptors bring questions, concerns and other information that may be beneficial to others.

In 2014 a retreat was held for Preceptors. A business meeting was held, followed by a luncheon and a professional development program called Tetramap©. Tetramap© is a globally proven learning model designed to improve team cohesion and collaboration, boosting productivity and customer service.



NEWSLETTER

Currently a newsletter is being developed. This newsletter will contain helpful precepting tips, spotlighting a preceptor or skills instructor, and introducing new preceptors as they are accepted into the role.