Residency Programs for New Graduate Nurses

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Introduction

Problem:

- In 2019, 27.7% of new nurses left their position within the first year of hire.[2]
- There is a gap between the expectations of new graduate nurses and the reality set forth by them in practice.[1]
- Upon entering the workforce, many new grads feel overwhelmed when the responsibility of caring for patients lives becomes a reality.
- As a result, the IOM called for the implementation of nurse residency programs (NRPs) to help new graduate nurses transition to practice.[2]
- But many nursing students possess limited knowledge on NRPs, and the potential they have to benefit their transition to practice.

Purpose: To explore research regarding the structure, benefits, and key factors of NRPs, and implement an evidence-based education session to inform senior nursing students of the current findings.

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Literature Search

Databases: CINAHL & MEDLINE

Search Parameters: Year of publication (2015-2019)

Key Words: nurse residency programs, new graduates, nurse, transition, residency, retention, turnover, benefits, costs, outcomes, recommendations, effectiveness

Current Findings

Structure of NRPs:

- Accreditation: Not all NRPs are accredited by national regulatory agencies (CCNE, ANCC); some are organizationally/internally based.[6]
- Accredited programs include UHC/AACN and Versant NRPs.[3,6]
- Accredited programs provide a standardized structure, length, and evidence-based curriculum, but organizational NRPs do not.
- Length: Programs range from 5 weeks to 18 months.[3,8]
- Content: NRPs typically focus on communication, critical thinking, leadership, stress management, prioritization, and delegation skills.[4]
- Education methods: Strategies used to educate, and transition, students into practice include didactic/classroom sessions, simulations, and clinical experiences.[8,10]

Benefits of NRPs:

- The most commonly reported benefit of NRPs was an increase in confidence in clinical skills and an increase in job satisfaction.[3,8,11]
- With an increase in job satisfaction, there is also an increase in retention and reduction in turnover seen amongst new nurses participating in NRPs, compared to those who do not participate in an NRP.[4,13]
- The average turnover costs for just one nurse is between $38,000 and $59,700, which totals up to millions of dollars each year that a healthcare organization could save through establishing an NRP.[9]

Key Factors to Success:

- NRPs with the highest retention rates were ones with:
  - Accreditation (UHC/AACN, Versant)[2,5]
  - Lengthier programs (24 weeks+)[2]
  - Shorter preceptor-student ratios in clinicals (1:1)[12]

Plan/Implementation

Date: March 11th, 2020

Location: UC College of Nursing – Senior Capstone Class

Target Audience: Senior Nursing Students

Purpose: To educated senior nursing students on the structure, benefits, and key factors to success of NRPs.

Objectives:

- Describe the setup of a typical nurse residency program.
- Discuss how nurse residency programs benefit both new graduate nurses and hospital facilities.
- List the various factors that impact the success of nurse residency programs.

Education Session:

- A 4-item Kahoot survey was given to the audience to evaluate students' initial knowledge base on NRPs.
- Next, a PowerPoint was presented to inform students of the current findings of NRPs.
- Afterwards, the same Kahoot survey was given to the audience again, to assess for an increase in knowledge regarding NRPs.

Feedback/Results

As exhibited by the Kahoot results (Table 1), the education session was effective in increasing students' perceived benefits of NRPs, increasing their knowledge on the structure of NRPs, and increasing their interests and willingness to join an NRP.

Table 1. Kahoot Results

Question	Answer	Pre-survey Results	Post-survey Results
1. How beneficial do you believe nurse residency programs to be?	Very much	37	51
	Somewhat	19	6
	Not so much	3	4
	Not at all	0	0
2. As a new nurse, I like the idea of a nurse residency program.	True	52	60
	False	7	1
3. Having a nurse residency program would make me more likely to seek employment at that facility.	Fully agree	31	50
	Somewhat agree	19	6
	Somewhat disagree	6	4
	Fully disagree	3	1
4. I understand the set-up of the average nurse residency program.	True	29	58
	False	30	3
Total Number of Participants:		59	61

Recommendations

Practice Changes:

- Research supports the implementation of NRPs to transition new graduates into practice as evidence by their ability to increase confidence and retention amongst new nurses and reduce turnover costs for healthcare facilities.
- NRPs need to be accredited, longer in length, and have shorter preceptor-student ratios in clinicals to be more successful.

Future Research:

- Additional research is needed to assess how preceptors and mentors are selected for clinicals in NRPs.
- Future research is needed to evaluate NRP's impact on patient outcomes and adverse events (pressure ulcers, falls, HAIs, etc.). [7,13]

Project Alterations:

- Many senior students may have already accepted job offers by the time we presented our project, therefore presenting to a group of junior nursing students may have been more beneficial.

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