Implementation Of The Transition To Practice Regulatory Model For Nurse Preceptors In A Rural Setting.

Abstract
Registered nurse turnover is a recurring problem for healthcare organizations. The inability of hospitals to retain registered nurses threatens the adequacy of healthcare delivery and increases personnel and patient care cost. The purpose of this capstone project was to take a leadership role in translating evidence into practice by successfully preparing preceptors to help new graduates transition successfully from the role of student to that of a profession nurse. Healthcare organizations require a stable, highly proficient and totally engaged nursing staff to provide effective and efficient levels of patient care. The first year of practice for a nurse graduate, the transition year, can be the most difficult in a nurses’ career. Without support during this time, many graduates leave the hospital with turnover rates as high as 61 percent, (Bowles & Candela 2005). The financial cost of losing a single nurse has been calculated to equal nearly twice a nurse’s annual salary. The average hospital is estimated to lose about $300,000 per year for each percentage increase in annual nurse turnover Atencio, Cohen & Gorenberg (2008). The loss of new employees negatively impacts the bottom line of healthcare organizations in numerous ways including: reduced quality of patient care, increased contingent staffing cost, increased cost for staffing nursing units and patient loss, Covell (2009). Primary causes of nurses leaving the first year post graduation were attributed to, poor training, lack of support and stress related to intense working situations and high patient acuity. Therefore, for patient safety and the well-being of new nurses, hospitals must make efforts to provide safe and effective environments that nurture the assimilation of graduate nurses into their systems. An effective preceptor program is one strategy that can be utilized to address retention of newly graduated nurses (Santucci, 2010). This quality improvement program provided knowledge to key stakeholders in a rural hospital in the Mississippi Delta to the evidence based practice strategy of the Transition to Practice Regulatory model. Data revealed, 100% of the participants reported the workshop met all stated objectives of the workshop. The preceptor program emphasized the organization’s goals and system leadership for quality improvement. The program created an evidenced based teaching strategy to improve educational preparation of nurse preceptors to support graduate nurses as they transition into professional practice.