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Developing an Evidence-Based Mentorship Program for New Graduate Nurse Practitioners

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The University of Vermont
Acknowledgments

• Dr. Ellen Long-Middleton PhD, APRN, FNP-BC
• Dr. Dorothy Mullaney DNP, APRN, MHS
• Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center
• The University of Vermont
• I declare that there are no relationships, conditions, or circumstances that present a conflict of interest relevant to the content of this presentation
Introduction -- Problem

- High turnover in the novice nurse practitioner population
- NPs experience high stress in their first position
- Lack of mentorship for novice NPs exacerbates stress & turnover
- High turnover results in negative institutional financial performance and the potential for worsened health outcomes.
Available Knowledge

• The annual nurse practitioner turnover rate versus physicians (AMGA, 2011)

• Novice nurse practitioner turnover is higher than in experienced NPs (Poghosyan, Norful & Marsolf, 2017; Sullivan-Bentz et al., 2010)

• Internal data reflects national trends

• Novice nurse practitioners who receive mentoring are less likely to leave their employment (Twine, 2018)
Theoretical Framework and Rationale

- Dreyfus model of skill acquisition (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1980) and Benner’s Novice to Expert (Benner, 1984)
- Middle range nursing theory- Health Transitions Model (Meleis et al., 2000)
- Mentoring is potentially an effective intervention to reduce nurse practitioner turnover
- Mentoring is potentially a cost-effective intervention
- Mentoring has the potential to positively impact patient outcomes
Purpose & Aims

• Assess need for structured mentorship program for new graduate nurse practitioners (NP) as an aspect of a quality improvement project to reduce novice NP turnover.
  • Based on the best evidence, develop a formal needs assessment for a mentorship program for new graduate NPs
  • Address the financial impact to the institution and return on investment of establishing a formal mentoring program
  • Present the findings to nursing leadership
  • Pilot project to begin Fall 2019
Context

• Academic health system consisting of a 400 bed medical center, four affiliate community hospitals, outpatient network, and National Cancer Institute Designated Cancer Center.

• Currently roughly 310 advanced practice nurses across the health system.

• 77 advanced practice openings at the time of investigation.

• 66% of advanced practice nurses receive no formal orientation and/or mentoring.

(The Value Institute at Dartmouth Hitchcock, 2018)
Intervention(s)

- Met with internal stakeholders regarding nurse practitioner turnover
- Appraised literature regarding novice nurse practitioner turnover
- Reviewed institutional data regarding turnover
- Financial projections made based on established formula
- Created formal needs assessment document for presentation to nursing leadership
- Beginning design process for pilot project
Study of the Intervention

• Needs assessment analysis

• Plan for prospective data collection during pilot project
  • Critical Care Advanced Practice Residency starting Fall 2019
Measures

- Needs assessment tool developed
  - Needs assessment based on best available evidence
  - Financial projections *developed with established formula adapted from nurse mentorship program.*
Ethical Considerations

- Exempted from University of Vermont Institutional Review Board process
- Objectivity in data collection needs assessment development
Results

• Institutional experience mirrors national data regarding turnover of new graduate nurse practitioners

• Facilitators and barriers to mentorship identified

• The financial estimates for such a program are modest when compared to replacement costs

• Nursing leadership receptive to needs assessment
# Financial Projections

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Interpretation

• Leadership openness to consider financial benefits

• Proceeding with a pilot project has the potential to further investigate the practical and theoretical aspects of mentoring
Limitations

- Better data on direct and indirect replacement costs could better quantify the return on investment (ROI)
- Data regarding the impact on mentoring and the five-year turnover rate could not be identified
- Late approval for pilot project limits the time for program design
Conclusions

• Needs assessment provided valuable data to nursing leadership in planning mentorship component for proposed NP residency program

• More study needed to fully understand the value of the mentoring process

• A pilot project will provide understanding to implement a mentorship residency program on a system wide basis
References

