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Patient Care Services / Nursing

#### The Valuable Oncology Nurse Preceptor

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#### Purpose

The development of an educational strategy to expand the role of oncology nurse preceptors at Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN) into adept educators and nurturing mentors.

### Significance & Background

- Today's oncology patients are treated with newly emerging chemotherapy, biotherapy, and targeted therapies that require current knowledge
- Nurses new to oncology need hands-on instruction and training from interactive, involved preceptors to foster the development of the highly specialized skill set essential to oncology nurses
- A positive orientee and preceptor relationship promotes nursing satisfaction and retention of new nurses
- If the connection between orientee and preceptor remains strong, the preceptor may develop into a mentor over time.

#### Interventions

- Steering committee of leadership, management and front line staff was recruited for the purpose of:
  - Evaluating current preceptor roles and responsibilities
  - Discussing challenges encountered by both orientee and preceptor
- Two oncology nurse educators incorporated committee feedback into a restructured preceptor model that included the following key concepts:
  - Recognition and support of preceptors
  - Mentorship
  - Principles of adult education and effective teaching
  - Communication strategies
  - Compassion fatigue awareness
- The course content challenges oncology nurses to evaluate the characteristics of an effective preceptor and a competent learner

# The Valuable Oncology Nurse Preceptor Donna Colabroy RN, MSN, AOCNS and Maura Price RN, BSN, OCN

### Evaluation

- The program has been successfully implemented at LVHN
- To date, multiple offerings have been held and feedback has been overwhelmingly positive
- Current approval is for nursing CE only, however numerous requests to broaden the course to include allied oncology health professionals have been received

- There is an imperative need for skilled oncology nurses
- population

# **Results and Findings**

• To evaluate translation of learned concepts into nursing preceptor practice, an online

	My skills as a preceptor have improved since taking this course	I learned at least one strategy to effectively communicate with a new orientee	I would recommend this course to others
Class 1	100%	100%	100%
Class 2	100%	100%	100%
Class 3	100%	100%	100%

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# **Discussion and Innovation**

Innovative strategies for supporting nurse preceptors and retaining new oncology nurses are essential to the continued quality care provision for the expanding oncology patient

survey was emailed at 10 weeks after the educational offering to program participants.

#### • At the completion of each course, participants were asked: Have you made any changes to your practice since completing the program?

- "Incorporating some of the effective communication strategies. Using open-ended questions, asking for feedback"
- "I encourage the employee to ask me questions so that I know if he or she is understanding what we are reviewing "



### **Participant Feedback**

- "Yes, I try to see things in the view of the new hire or trainee"

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