

Oops a New Hat at Work...Now What?

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Why a new Hat?

Goals:

An evident trend recognized by nursing leadership at one community health network was the need to assign unlicensed assistive personnel to observe patients assessed by nursing staff as a safety risk to themselves and/or staff. As a result of this growing need, a job description with a primary function of sitting at the bedside providing direct observation of those patients identified was developed. Although helpful, as stated in the job description the skill set of these employees was restrictive to basic observation with limited direct patient care. Nursing leadership determined that to enhance the safety of our patients requiring direct observation and to also provide additional hands on assistance to the nursing staff assigned to care for these patients that an increased skill set was necessary for those currently hired to this position.

With those needs in mind a customized program was created to address the educational gaps of the current staff transitioning into the new position. The educational program was developed to heighten the ability of the unlicensed assistive personnel to provide assistance with direct patient care activities (i.e. bathing, toileting and mobilization) including recognition and reporting of safety risks and behavioral changes.

Browsing for a New Hat:

Description:

- A transition planning work group consisting of nursing leadership, human resource consultants, and unit staff was formed to address the trend.
- Changes were made to the current job description to address network needs as well as development of a new job title.
- An evaluation of the current orientation curriculum and level of current knowledge was completed.
- A customized curriculum was developed utilizing available resources from within the health network and outside in the community and was presented to members of the transition planning work group.

References:

1. Small, A., Okunga, A. & Joseph, T. (2012). Continuing education for patient care technicians: a unit based RN-led initiative. *American Journal of Nursing*, 112 (8), 51-55.
2. Traicoff, D.A., Walke, H.T., Jones, D.S., Gogstad, E.K., Imtroy, R. & White, M.E. (2008). Replicating success: developing a standard FETP curriculum. *Public Health Reports*, 123 (1), 28-34.

Choosing the Right Style and Fit:

Goals:

- Identify the educational needs of staff transitioning into the new nursing support role.
- Identify resources available, to assist with the delivery of the new educational program.
- Develop a customized orientation curriculum for current employees transitioning into the new nursing support role.
- Ongoing curriculum revisions made to class content and delivery methodologies based on formal electronic learner feedback.

“Buy in” and Wearing a New Hat:

Evaluation and Implications:

- 96.5% of learners agree or strongly agree that the education provided will improve job performance and productivity.
- When asked what was the most useful learners shared:
 - “Gaining more knowledge to further our position”
 - “Helped understand more about what I can do and cannot do for patients”
 - “Will be more aware of surroundings and take better care of patients”
 - “Be an active member of the team”
 - “Clear understanding of new responsibilities”
- When asked what would improve the program the learners shared:
 - “An opportunity for more hands on practice with equipment”
 - “Incorporate more teamwork activities....emphasizing assisting”
 - “Some areas of the class focused on what skills were not our responsibility leading to confusion as to what our responsibilities actually are”
- Revisions continue to be made to classroom content and delivery methodologies based on formal electronic learner feedback.

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