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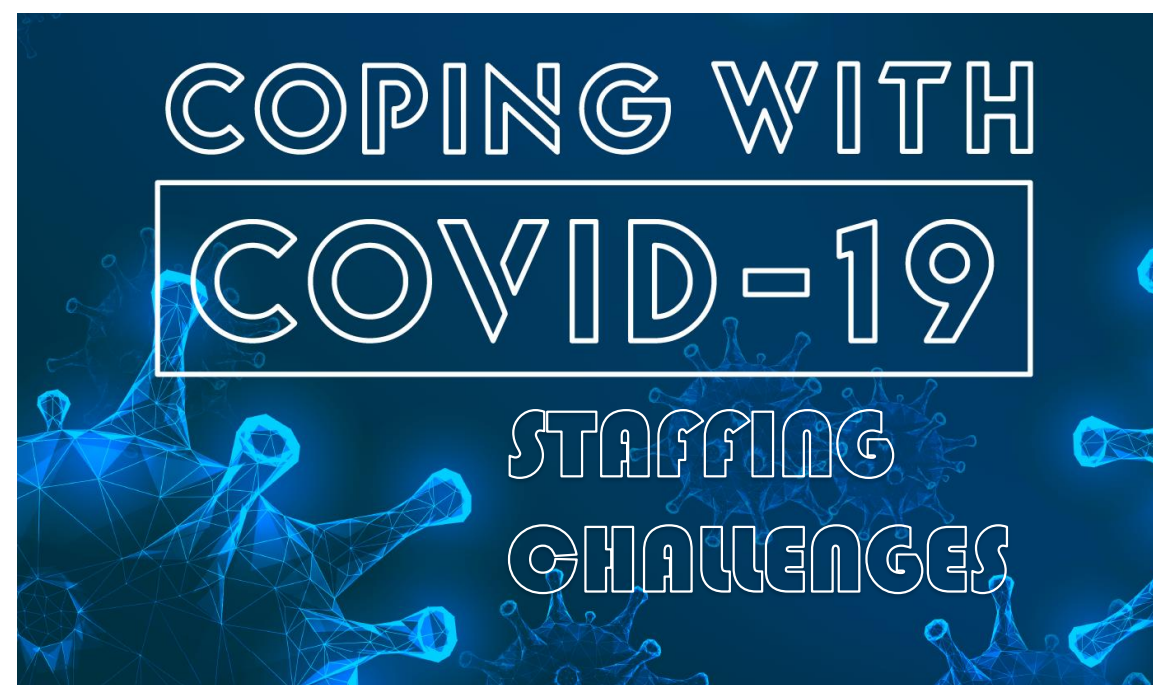
COVID-19 Surge: Extraordinary Response to Unprecedented Times



Simone Cheong, MSHSA, MSN, RN, CMSRN & Kelly Delgado, MSN, RN, RN-BC

Background

Beginning in March of 2019, during intermittent COVID-19 pandemic surges, large influxes of patients overwhelmed the COVID-19 patient care areas. These areas were challenged with having adequate staff to perform all the tasks necessary to provide safe and comprehensive care. Staff were overwhelmed and stressed.



Project Goals/Objectives

The purpose of the development of a labor pool was to emergently and systematically provide support staff to hospital COVID-19 patient care and other areas during times of patient surge.



Methods of Implementation

- Innovative concept of a Labor Pool emerged to optimize staffing during COVID-19 crisis with collaborative efforts of both nursing teams and Human Resources.
- Non-direct patient care staff from across organization were asked to volunteer to provide extra support in COVID-19 areas.
- Labor Pool included staff from various departments.
- To assist direct care nurses:
 - Non-clinical nurses re-trained to take vital signs and make phone calls to update families that could not come to visit.
 - Nursing students teamed up with clinical partners.
 - Dietary increased delivery to accommodate high demand of food requests.
 - Environmental department deployed key personnel to areas in most need.
 - Office personnel helped take temperatures at employee entrances.
- These opportunities allowed many staff members to feel part of nursing team.



Outcomes

Through the implementation of the Labor Pool, non-direct care staff were deployed to COVID-19 patient care areas. The clinical staff in these areas felt supported and relieved. The Labor Pool proved to be an innovative initiative that benefited the clinical staff, patients and healthcare organization.

Discussion

The unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic patient surges brought about out-of-the-box thinking on how to help support the clinical staff. The extraordinary collaboration will remind us thru history that teamwork between departments in the hospital setting is vital for the survival of the nursing team.



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