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Escape Room: A Competency Validation Approach

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Citation

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MAGNET RECOGNIZED
AMERICAN NURSES CREDENTIALING CENTER

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Goal

The purpose of the evidence-based practice initiative is to enhance annual competencies of clinical staff in the medical/surgical areas through innovative validation methods.

Methods

- Clinical Nurse Educators (CNEs) identified need for change with clinical staff annual competencies.
- CNEs brainstormed new concepts for creating competencies.
- In collaboration with the Unit Based Practice Councils (UBPC), a learning needs assessment was conducted in each of the four units.
- Unit-based competencies were identified.
- The concept of an escape room activity was adapted and tailored to meet the needs of competency validation (Figure 1).
- A set up of different competency skill stations were designed separately for both Registered Nurses (RNs) and Clinical Partners (CPs).
- Groups of 6 to 8 staff participated and completed the activity within a one and a half hour time frame.
- A pre-test and post-test were conducted to measure knowledge before and after completion of the activity and an evaluation was completed by all staff.
- A scale evaluation was used from very dissatisfied to very satisfied and for the 180 submitted evaluations 100% answered very satisfied.

Outcomes

- A total number of 120 RNs and 45 CPs completed the activity.
- Total of 29 RN and 10 CP sessions were conducted over a period of 4 months.
- RNs completed twelve and CPs completed five competencies.
- The pre-test average scores measuring knowledge for the RNs were only 50% and post-test increased to 91%. The CPs pretest average scores were 42% and posttest increased to 92% (Figure 2).
- Staff evaluations determined a 100% satisfaction rate.

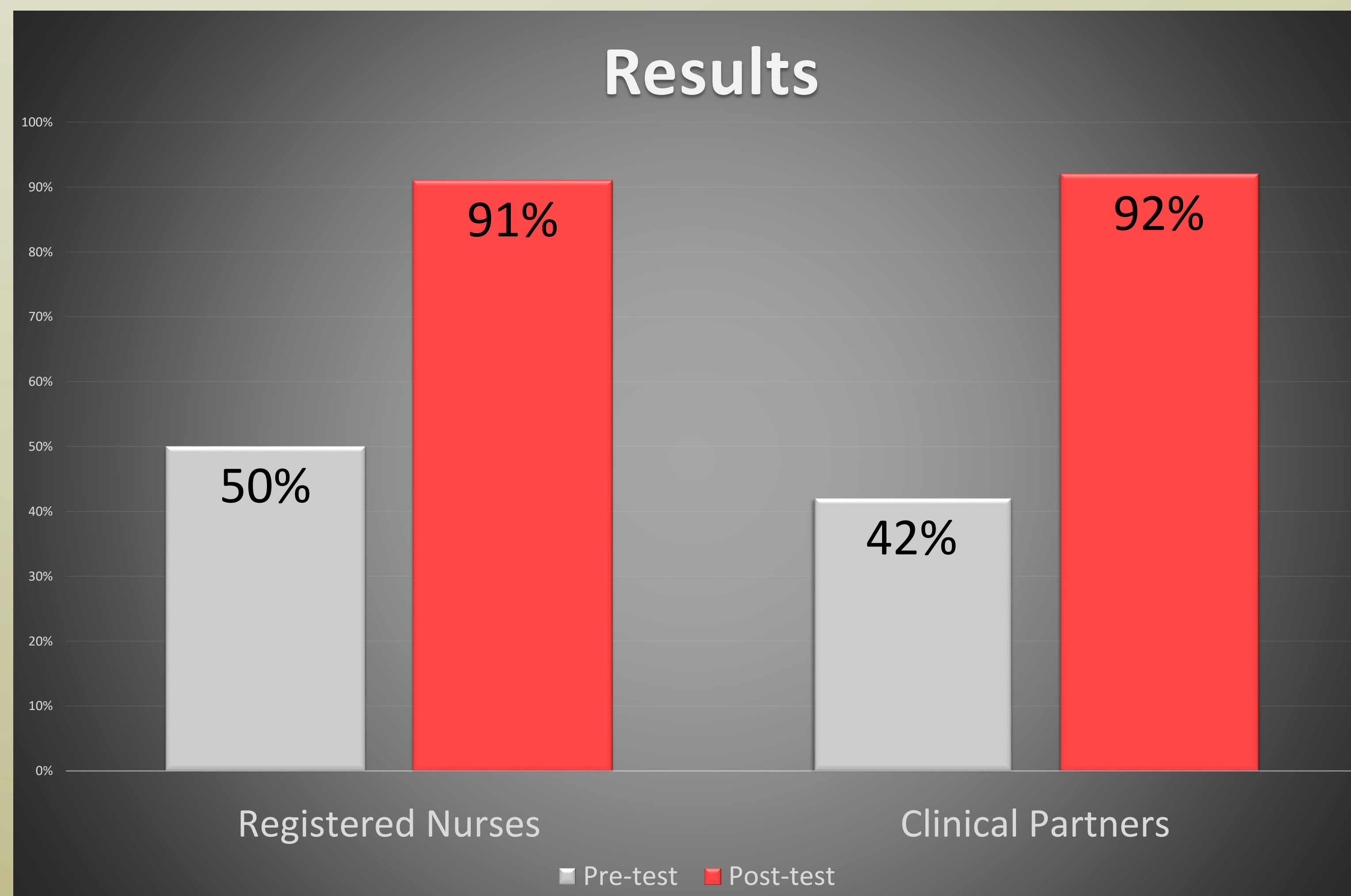**Figure 1. Nurses, clinical partners and CNEs participating in activity**

Figure 2. Average pre-test and post-test results

Discussion

- The innovative method for measuring competency of RNs and CPs in the medical-surgical areas was initiated by the exploration of non-traditional strategies for engaging the team through active learning.
- The nurse educators searched for modalities to demonstrate competency, improve nurse satisfaction, bridge the generational gaps of the staff, while saving cost associated with annual education.
- The escape room competency validation approach proved to be a successful method where staff demonstrated skill proficiency and teamwork in an entertaining setting.
- Staff felt glad to show competency in their role and reinforce current knowledge.

Implications for Practice

- Staff competency is essential to provide adequate care to patients.
- Validation of staff's ability to perform skills within their role has traditionally been designed based on staff's lack of proficiency in performing a designated skill.
- Clinical nurse educators need to find new learning strategies to engage clinical staff in active learning while increasing their level of competence.
- Overall, increased competency and satisfaction may positively reflect an improvement of clinical outcomes.

References

Available upon request

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