

## **Abate the Stress! The Development and Implementation of a New Medication Exam for Newly Hired Nurses**

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# Abate the Stress! The Development and Implementation of a New Medication Exam for Newly Hired Nurses

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## Purpose

Medication Exam testing for newly hired nurses was observed to be a highly stressful and dissatisfying experience during their first week. The Professional Development Team identified an improvement in the current state of assessing medication competency was needed. Additional concerns were identified from an organizational level. Test administration cost increased by 66% from 2019 to 2020. Shockingly, the test was also identified as unreliable due to the answers easily found on the internet.

## Background

In order to create and foster a culture of safety basic medication knowledge assessment must be taken by every newly hired nurse. This standard ensures nurses' medication knowledge on administration, side effects, and calculations is at a competent level. All nurses are tested upon hire to identify needs for continued education and intervention for nurses who may struggle with various aspects of medication administration, side effects, or calculations (Sneck, Saarnio, Isola, Boigu, 2016).

## Methods

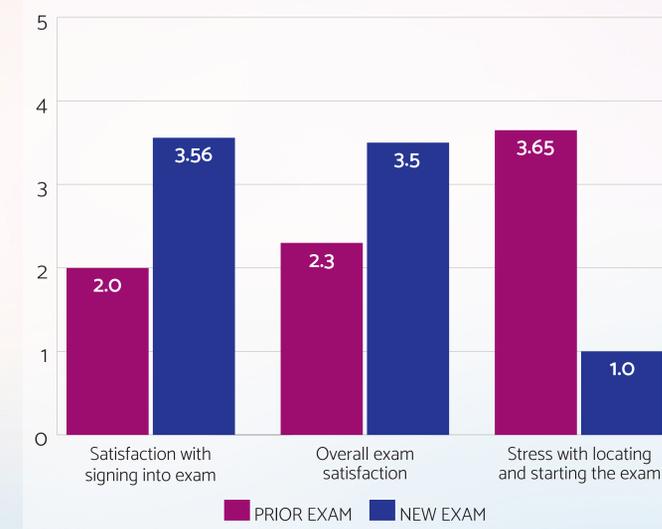
Stakeholders attended planning and development meetings to ensure a cohesive transition to the new Medication Exam. This included the following:

- **Team Development-** Clinical Nurses, Professional Development Specialist, Pharmacists, and Patient Care Specialists
- **Survey Development-** 4-point Likert Scale with QR code 
- **Survey Administration/Analysis-** 100 nurses
- **Exam Development/Validation/Pilot Testing**
- **New Exam Implementation**
- **Survey/Analysis-** 100 nurses

## Findings

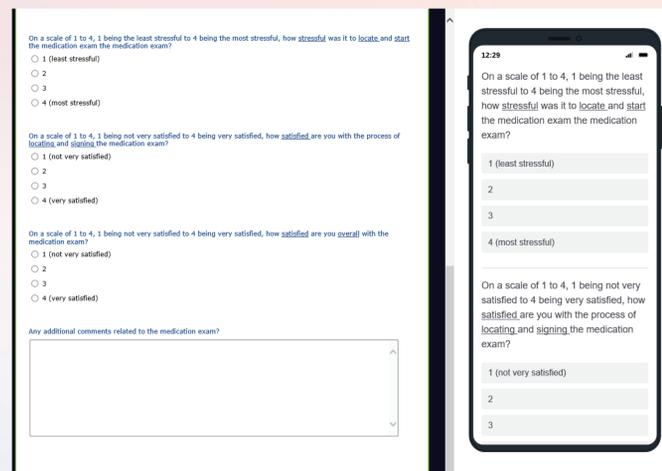
Improving newly hired nurse satisfaction related to the medication exam by 25% was the initial goal for this project. It was achieved and has been maintained with the implementation of the new medication exam. Nurse satisfaction with the process of signing in and accessing the medication exam increased from 2.0 to 3.56, an improvement of 78%. Overall satisfaction with the medication exam increased from 2.3 to 3.5, an 52% improvement. It is amazing to be able to assess their medication competency, without unnecessary stress, and individualize their orientation for medication safety.

### NEWLY HIRED NURSE MEDICATION EXAM



## Implications

There is interest in if this project had a greater impact than simply improving nurse satisfaction and stress level with medication exam testing. Continued research is necessary to determine if this new medication exam has decreased the medication errors in the network. The posttest survey delivered via QR code will continue to be used in order to assure that decreased stress level and increased satisfaction with the medication exam is sustained.



## REFERENCE

Sneck S, Saarnio R, Isola A, Boigu R. (2016). Medication competency of nurses according to theoretical and drug calculation online exams: A descriptive correlational study. Nurse Educ Today. 36:195-201. doi: 10.1016/j.nedt.2015.10.006. Epub 2015 Oct 23. PMID: 26521035.