Rebuilding a Nursing Division by Achieving ANCC Magnet Designation
The Story of Georgetown University Hospital (2000-2010)

Background & Goal

Reverse nurse-sensitive Joint Commission [JC] Core Measure & Safety trends while improving patient experience scores as measured by CMS.

The goal was to implement a patient safety game-changer program focused on JC targets – and improve Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) patient experience scores – while supporting a high-performing clinical magnet nursing team at Georgetown University Hospital in Washington, DC. In addition, they aim to equip nurses at all levels with a multi-faceted, data-driven program specific to outcome improvement targets and embed key concepts into the fabric of nursing practice and individual performance at the hospital.

Program Background

ANCC Magnet designation acknowledges hospitals that act as “magnets” for excellence by creating a work environment that recognizes, rewards, and promotes professional nursing. It is symbolic of leadership in establishing a standard of excellence and the highest possible accolade for a nursing system. It is comprised of four levels, with Level III & Level IV requiring completion of at least one Performance Improvement Project and/or IRB-approved research study. Participants are limited to selecting projects that are directly tied to improving JC core measure performance, CMS patient experience scores, and patient safety targets. This lowers nursing vacancy, turnover and burnout rate as well as increases retention rates and enhances recruitment advantage, particularly for highly educated nurses. In addition it attracts high achieving nurses which lead to increased nurse and patient satisfaction.

Evidence of Success

• Reduced pre-term births to 2.5% in African American women seen at 11th Street compared to 15.6% in Philadelphia (2011).
• Since program inception, more than 150 performance improvement and 35 IRB-approved research studies considered a national Best Practice have enabled nursing to achieve 97% of identified nurse-sensitive patient safety and experience targets.
• Outcomes after seven years include:
  • Number of open beds at Georgetown increased by nearly 300
  • Filled positions increased by nearly 500%
  • More than 87% of bedside nurses are baccalaureate or masters prepared
  • Patient satisfaction with nursing increased from 20th to 80th percentile
  • 2010 HCAHPS: Patients Treated with Courtesy & Respect: 84%
  • RNs Listened Carefully: 78%
  • RNs Explained Things Understandably: 73%
  • Nursing satisfaction consistently and significantly above national norms: 2010 Scores exceeded the national average in 13 of 15 indicators
  • GUH Nursing spearheads MedStar System Implementation of electronic medical record MedConnect
  • Clinical complication rates below national norms; 2010: 3 ICUs win Beacon Award
  • Scholarly activity of nursing staff among highest in the nation
    • 2005: Shared Governance Council Expansion: Legislative Affairs Council established; 2010: GUH nurses joined conference call with First Lady Michelle Obama & Dr. Mary Wakefield regarding the Affordable Care Act
    • 2010: 87% GUH nurses are BSN-prepared
    • 2010: 44% of all eligible GUH nurses specialty-certified
    • 2011: GUH Nursing sponsors the First National Patient Safety Conference & Awards
    • 2003 - 2010: Community Involvement through Service Events yearly average:
      Book Bag Drive – 400 book bags to DC children
      Food for Families Contribution - 9,000 non-perishables
      Share the Warmth Campaign Contribution - 500 coats
      Bake Sales - $5000 for GUH Patient Sharing Fund

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