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Term Paper on Certification in Nursing

Professional Nursing Practice

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The definition of competence is the adequacy or the possession of required skill, knowledge, qualification, or capacity (Dictionary.com (2015). According to this definition, is it determine that licensure can assure competency in the field of nursing? If so, how can one establish that the nurse is competent enough to work? Also, is it essential for the use of nurse residencies to gain competencies needed as a new graduate nurse? When it comes to competency in nursing, it requires a continuation of knowledge and practice in the field. This is seen as a difficult task to accomplish because of the consistent updates of technology, hectic change, and clinical advancement relating to new evidence that is arising. According to the Institute of Medicine (IOM) (2010), The Future of Nursing states that competency is vital in a variety of areas, such as progression in the quality and healthcare systems, informatics, evidence-based practice, knowledge in complex systems, improvement in leadership and management skills and method. As well as the population of health and based care management, and health policy knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Nursing Certification is justified as an advancement in being competent and knowledgeable beyond one’s basic preparation. According to the American Board of Nursing Specialties (ABNS), certification is described as the recognition for specialized knowledge, skills, and experience that is represented through the standards that are set by a nursing specialty to fulfill for ideal health outcomes. This encourages for nurses to feel motivated to make improvement in outcomes relating to one’s expertise in a specialty of one’s desire. Through obtaining certification in a designated specialty, nurses appreciate the certification because one can validate the personal accomplishment, satisfaction and the knowledge that is received. Certification is stated to enhance the empowerment of staff nurses, which as a result decrease turnover and promote retention. ABNS believe that it is essential for registered nurses to obtain certification in the designated area of one’s practice as well as having employers hire certified nurses because it gives one the ability to objectively determine the qualification of a nurse to deliver the specialized care needed.

As an organization recognizes the importance of certification, the institution will realize the positive outcome it will have on the nursing workforce as a whole. Unfortunately, although certification withholds some positive aspect, it remains with several barriers within the designated specialty. A program was created known as The Certification Achievement Program (CAP) for such reasons, to decrease the barriers seen in gaining certification on the medical-surgical unit. The main implementation of the program is to counteract the barriers and provide support, inspiration and peer collaboration.

The incorporation of a nursing certification is proven through studies of having a positive impact on patients. It is determined by these studies that there is a positive relationship between nursing certification with patient safety indicators, such as falls, pressure ulcers and the utilization of restraints. It is seen, that there is a decrease in falls, mortality, and failure to rescues rates, and the length of stay in the rehabilitation setting. When it comes to code -related situations, that the responses became more effective. An improvement was seen in the results of cardiac arrest, treatment for arrhythmia, the length of time for intubation on behalf of respiratory arrest, and survival rates in entirety. Not only did certification has shown a positive result on quality of care, but it demonstrates a positive impact on healthcare stakeholders. It is seen that were a decline in rates relating to turnover and vacancy as well as an increase in satisfaction of the patient.

It is established as previously discussed that obtaining certification carries multiple benefits on behalf of both the patient and the nurse, but some barriers remain with nurses being highly motivated to act on such advantage. The barriers identified are the cost of the exam, discomfort with tests, lack of support/reward from the institution, the proper resources needed to prepare, and the absence of access to the exam site. These barriers can be overcome with interventions, such as having participants take part in review courses in preparation for the medical-surgical exam. This, as a result, will improve the nurses’ self-efficacy in relation to self-competency, initiative, and leadership. Along with exam preparation, it is essential to incorporate study groups, giving recognition to an increase in certification rates, mentoring, lending libraries, assistance with exam registration, financial, and personal support.

This all comes back to the Certification Achievement Program (CAP), which focuses on eliminating these known barriers and promoting for development of nurses on a professional level. This program designed to mentor and give guidance to nurses throughout the certification process. This project was an on-site- 2-day review course that provides course materials and contact hours accommodated by the certifying organization. It also was convenient because the review courses were scheduled where it did not interfere with the nurse’s work shifts and it was only given on a weekly basis. The weekly session includes review content and practice questions done with colleagues provided by the project director. There are support and guidance with application process and reimbursement for exam fee by the hospital in the successful completion of certification exam. Follow with reimbursement, the nurses were given a yearly bonus when maintaining the certificate. Also, with group participation, peer support is provided and test-taking strategies were reviewed. Additional to these benefits, the participants received a test blueprint, learn how to maintain certification, an outline of review course, eligibility of criteria, instructor resume and examination fees. Then a certified nurse from that same unit was brought to share the benefits of being certified and the experiences relating to it. Throughout the session, the nurse manager and chief executive continue to be present.

Then arrangements were made with the Medical-Surgical Nursing Certification Board to have a “paper-and-pencil exam” by the project director. Upon examination, both the project director and nurse manager gave support and encouragement before and after examination. After, each participant was congratulated individually on completion of the examination. As 3 weeks approach after the exam, the participants were given certification results and was able to communicate outcome with the project director and nurse manager. Then 6 weeks following the exam, there was a celebration ceremony to counteract the barrier of lack of organizational support that was seen. Also, at the ceremony, the chief nurse executive, hospital administrator and family/ friends were there at the ceremony.

The Certification Achievement Program presented a high success rate based on certification achievement. Out of the 17 nurses, fourteen meet the medical-surgical nurse certification credential (CMSRN. The passing rate of obtaining such certification was at 82.3%. The success of the program, when comparing CAP with the national average was 77.3% for those who receive certification in 2010-2012. It is shown, previously to the creation of the program that only 2 out of 31 nurses on the unit (6.45%) would attain certification in one’s specialty. After CAP was developed, the certification rate began to increase to 51.6%.

The intended purpose of the Certification Achievement program fulfilled its main objective of minimizing barriers and encouraging for nurses to receive certification. It is proven through the session that was performed that the program success rate exceed the national average when it came to passing rate on the medical-surgical unit.

Reference

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