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Summer 2023

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Recommended Citation

Butler, Jamie RN; Sevinc, Amanda RN; Beaulieu, Renee RN; and Patrick, Kaitlyn RN, "Bridging the Experience-Complexity Gap with the Clinical Education Coordinator Role" (2023). *Research and Education Celebration 2023*. 33.

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Bridging the Experience-Complexity Gap with the Clinical Education Coordinator Role

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Introduction

With the growing gap between nursing experience and patients' complexity, quality clinical care, patient safety and nursing job satisfaction are at risk. More novice nurses are expected to deliver more complex care, while fewer expert nurses are available to mentor and support this novice staff. The Advisory Board recommends teaching novice nurses more effectively and redistributing experience across the organization. The Clinical Education Coordinator (CEC) role was created to address this gap in practice experience.

Objectives

To support nursing staff in the inpatient setting to reduce knowledge deficit, anxiety and turnover.

To promote evidence-based practices in the clinical care environment and improved patient outcomes.

To act as an additional resource to help off load the Rapid Response Team's noncritical workload.



Intervention

The CEC role was designed to assist patient care staff primarily off shift hours from 3p-3a. The CECs round the entire hospital as well as responds to pages, phone calls and Vocera messages. The team is comprised of 4 expert nurses ranging in experience and backgrounds in medical surgical, medical, trauma, psychiatry and nursing education.

The team is also responsible for:

- Keeping up to date with and disseminating new product education
- "Grab and Go" Monthly Education (5-minute education sessions, with a new topic each month)
- Participating in Shared Governance, including co-chairing Night Council Committee
- Performing annual competency validations
- Multidisciplinary nightly meetings
- Collaborating with unit Educators and the Nurse Residency Program to support and mentor new graduate nurses



Results

Over the past year and a half, the CEC role has grown into a reliable resource for floor nurses.

- On average, this team helps with 250 educational moments a month.
- "Grab and Go" education has been seen as an easy, accessible way for night shift to gain new and changing clinical information.
- The Nurse Residency Program feedback has been positive, stating "The implementation of the clinical education coordinator position has been incredibly impactful for off shift nurse residents. They feel the overwhelming support from those in the CEC role and express how helpful it is to have a resource to connect to when they need it!" – Brittany Patterson, Manager, BHNRP.
- The CEC role has expanded with the creation of specialty area-dedicated CECs.

Conclusion

Integration of the CEC role has had a positive impact on the clinical practice environment in ensuring novice nurses have the skills necessary to provide adequate patient care.

References

Nursing Executive Center. (2019, June). *The Experience-Complexity Gap*. Advisory Board.
<https://www.advisory.com/Topics/Nursing-Care-Quality-and-Service/2019/06/The-Experience-Complexity-Gap>