Leveraging Wisdom Through a Third Age Nursing Support Group
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Objectives
- Discuss the impact of developing a Third Age Nursing Support Group
- Examine the benefits of a proactive approach to leveraging wisdom in the workplace

What is the "Third Age"?
Definition
- Third Age = 50 yrs to 75 years of age

Audience Responses
- If you are a third age nurse, pleasestand.....
- If your boss is a third age nurse, please stand.....

"The adventurous spirit who wants to explore alternatives to conventional retirement – changing direction rather than being pulled out of the action." Dr. Faye Boorer
Nursing Workforce Statistics

• The U.S. Nursing Workforce: Trends in Supply and Education Report from the HRSA (Health Resources and Services Administration), April, 2013

Average Age: 44.6

1/3rd of the nursing workforce is > 50 y.o.

Nursing Workforce Statistics

• 28 million RNs and 690,000 LVNs/LPNs
• RNs younger than 30 y.o. has increased
• Average age of the nurse has increased by 2 years
• Percentage of RNs in the hospital has held steady

Nurse Workforce Statistics

Figure 10. Counts of RNs in the Workforce, by Age, in Five-Year Increments

Data source: Health Resources and Services Administration.
Nurse Workforce Statistics

The Journey

- Magnet Survey – 2012
  - Dr. Faye Bower

- Research on Third Age Principles

Wisdom at Work

- Robert Wood Johnson Report: Retaining Experienced RNs and Their Knowledge – Case Studies of Top Performing Organizations

- Outlined results of:
  - Six ergonomic projects
  - Four staffing projects
  - Three other projects
Where to Start?

- Identify your Third Age Nurses
- Recruitment: offered four 1-hour CE programs to increase awareness about developing a Third Age Identity and the Six Principles
- 36 nurses attended the CE Programs

Summary of CE Program Content

- The 30-year life “bonus”
- Positive aging characteristics
  - Vibrant
  - Healthy
  - Wise
  - Competent
  - Independent
  - Creative
  - Adventurous
  - Engaged
- Six Principles of Growth and Renewal in the Third Age
  1. Mindful reflection and risk-taking
  2. Realistic optimism
  3. Positive Third Age Identity
  4. Redefining and balancing work and play
  5. Personal freedom and intimacy
  6. Building a more caring life with care for others, for self, for the world

Third Age Support Program

- What’s In It For Me?
  - The program is intended to be transform the senior nurse by a personal journey of visioning possibilities and intentionally executing an idealized professional and personal future for the second half of their life.
Learning Needs Assessment

Results of the learning needs assessment completed at the end of the CE Program

Insurance 15%
Financial 27%
Legal 6%
Work/Career 25%
Health 11%
Resources 9%
Interpersonal Issues 7%

Third Age Support Group

• Meeting
  – Bi-monthly
  – Offered at two times: 7:30-8:30am and 11:00-12:00pm
  – Send outlook meeting planners
  – Post flyers

• Topics Offered to Date:
  – Retirement Planning
  – Estate Planning
  – Long Term Care Insurance
  – Planning for Nursing Fulfillment in the Third Age
  – The Future of Nursing: Leading Change
  – Social Security
  – Financial Planning

Third Age Nurse Survey

• Center for Third Age Nurses Survey – 2007 (250 nurses)
• Themes
  – Nurses love their work
  – Most nurses need to keep working after 50 y.o. for financial reasons
  – Nurses seek collaborative environments

• Analysis of Data
  – Stay role-engaged
  – Use their wisdom/experience in a meaningful way
  – Recognize barriers
  – Actively think about how to stay engaged, but don’t know what to do about it
  – Career planning is a viable way to support commitment and engagement

Survey Recommendations

• In order to stay committed and engaged, attention must be given to three activities:
  – Link personal goals with employment options
  – Promote work as an opportunity to express passion for nursing
  – Align and create a position and place to match personal goals with passion for nursing
• Barriers – Time and Ignorance


Presentation on Nursing Fulfillment

• Seven Activities of Transition
• Career Progression Plans

• If you decide to retire, ask yourself
  – How will I use my time? What will help me feel useful?

Seven Activities for Transition

1. Prepare a plan – A Life Portfolio

• Diversify the flow of your life
• Free yourself for what’s important
• Create the right space
• Live vitally
Seven Activities for Transition

2. Know your strengths
3. Evaluate your needs
4. Prepare yourself for the future
5. Build networks
6. Be flexible
7. Develop a support system

BRMCP Third Age Nurse
Survey Results

• What age do you plan to retire?
  – Range 62-75
• Why retire at that age?
  – Taught all my life that 65 y.o. is when I should retire
  – I will get full retirement at 66 y.o.
  – Parents didn’t retire until 70 y.o.
  – Based on desire to travel and $$$
  – Due to disillusionment with nursing
  – Financial reasons – caring for elderly mother
  – Once kids are done with college

BRMCP Third Age Nurse
Survey Results

• Work/Career Plans between now and your planned retirement?
  – Stay in current job
  – Finish MSN
  – Change careers to legal nurse consultant
  – Mission work
  – Feel age would be a barrier to changing jobs
  – Mentoring nurses
BRMCP Third Age Nurse Survey Results

- Concerns that would affect your retirement plans?
  - Mobility decrease due to arthritis
  - Vision changes
  - Carpal tunnel
  - Cognitive changes
  - Family needs
  - Back, knees, neck

What would a strategy be to leverage your wisdom to benefit the organization?
- Develop a program "Project PRN" – allow nurses to work PT or PRN (but maintain benefits)

Projects discussed
- Mentoring role
- Awards initiatives
- P&Ps
- Data collection and analysis
- Research projects
- Community
- Advocate
- PI Projects
- Competency skills
- Nurse navigator
- Conflict resolution

12 Strategic Areas for Senior Nurse Retention

Ask the question: How can we retain our senior nurses? How can we build an environment that is attractive, esp. to senior nurses?

1. Compensation and Benefits
2. Workload and Schedules
3. Workload and Ergonomics
4. Shared Governance
5. New Roles for Senior Nurses
6. Education, Training, and Leadership Development
7. Retirement Transition
8. Recruitment of Senior Nurses
9. Support and Recognition
10. Succession Planning
11. Wellness
12. Anchor Changes Into the Culture

Recommendations and Best Practice Examples

1. Compensations and Benefits
   - Bi-annual market adjustments
   - Performance management bonuses
   - 401(k) – matching funds increase with years of service
   - Full benefits for employees working 20-30 hrs per week
2. Workload and Schedules
   - Reduce hours; even work at home
   - Fewer hours; flexible scheduling
   - Phased retirement
   - Life Cycle Empowerment Program (flex time, compressed work schedule, job sharing, part time with full time benefits)
   - Part time status with summers off
   - Work 6 months and take 6 months off with full benefits
Recommendations and Best Practice Examples

3. Workload and Ergonomics
   - New lift technology
   - Softer floors
   - Self-propelled patient beds
   - Mini-stations to decrease walking
   - Supply cabinets near patient rooms
   - A nurse-ergonomist position to focus on patient handling

4. Shared Governance
   - Promote leadership opportunities
   - Develop the older nurse instead of directing them to retirement
   - Recognize these nurse’s knowledge, wisdom and experience as a key
   - CEO partner forums and lunches

5. New Roles for Senior Nurses
   - They would stay if they could change HOW they nurse
   - Clinical mentor
   - Community liaison
   - Relief nurse
   - Safety officer
   - Patient educator
   - Admissions and discharges role
   - Surgical liaison

6. Education, training and leadership
   - Tuition reimbursement expanded to include certification
   - Develop new skills by working in temporary assignments or team projects
   - “Bridge to Success” program

7. Retirement Transition
   - Phased retirement programs
   - Pool of retirees
   - Fill roles less physically demanding
   - Help with retirement and financial planning
   - Seminars on retirement planning, elder care and work-life balance

8. Recruitment of Senior Nurses
   - Encourage mature workers to consider a career in nursing
   - Offer nursing refresher program and then work in the hospital
   - Tap a pool of retirees and offer them temporary, part time and even full time work
Recommendations and Best Practice Examples

9. Support and Recognition
   - Rounding program
   - Programs for older workers such as eldercare, "single again", financial seminars, grief programs, child care for grandchildren, etc.
   - Excellence recognition programs

10. Succession planning – prevent wisdom from walking out the door

11. Wellness
   - "Be Fit Program"
   - Onsite massage
   - Health support groups

12. Anchor Changes into the Culture
   - Senior nurses as invaluable players including them in shaping a caring, supportive culture that aims to excel in patient care

Third Age Nurse Examples

- Vi Trulson, BSN, RN
  - Began teaching BLS and ACLS while still a staff nurse
  - Changed to PRN status and now is teaching these classes at three Baylor Hospitals – 6 to 8 days a month
  - Value: increased time with her grandchildren

- Janet Stovall, BSN, RN, NE-BC
  - Former manager of Med/Surg Unit transitioned to the first Lean Director
  - Value: increased responsibility to improve efficiencies at the facility (to give back)

- Norma Capps, MACRN, BSN, RN
  - Transitioned to Employee Health Nurse
  - Received her MACRN in 2012 (not required for her position)
  - Value: Self Enrichment

- Jill White, RN
  - Retired – 2014
  - A cruise with work friends!
**Third Age Nurse Examples**

- Robin Hanks, BSN, RN, CAPA
  - Leg injury while skiing
  - Coordinated with Day Surgery Manager to work in Education Services on special projects
    - Exit Care Patient Education
    - IV Start Program
  - Value: Utilizing established physician relationships for patient education and clinical expertise with IV Starts

**Nurse Nightingale’s Program**

- A unique, rewarding opportunity for retired or inactive RNs to use their professional expertise by providing compassionate care to patients and their families.
- Also creating an extraordinary environment for the retired or inactive RNs to share and learn from BRMCP employees.

*Ages range from 53 to 77*

**Program Goal**

- To assist the BRMCP nurses in providing support to patient care
- To utilize the volunteer RNs’ professional knowledge and skills by providing for and assisting with designated needs of patients and families.
- To establish an interactive communication between the patients, families, staff
- To enhance an interpersonal relationship between staff and the Nightingale Volunteer
Scope of Position

- Assist with daily hygiene
- Assist with daily activities
- Assist with completing menus and feeding patients
- Under the direction of the staff RN:
  - assist with patient understanding care
  - assist with appropriate patient care tasks
- Make rounds on patients evaluating needs
- Communicate with other healthcare team members
- Follow-up phone calls to discharge patients.

System-Wide Spread

- Meet with Key Nurse Leaders in the Organization
  - Ellen Pitcher, CNO at Baylor Regional Medical Center at Plano
  - Dr. Dora Bradley, VP for BHCS Nursing Professional Development
- Tap into the Third Age Nurses
  - Assist in being the leaders of the change and
  - Develop strategies for retention of senior nurses

Identify At-Risk Departments

1st
- HR identifies departments with more than 10% of nurses above age 50 y.o.

2nd
- Assessment of employees retirement risk

3rd
- Prioritize near-retirement staff by criticality

4th
- Manager builds individualized retention plan for nurses critical to department
Leveraging Strategies

• Encourage high value staff to delay retirement
  – Retirement risk appraisal
  – Phased retirement plan
  – Dedicated project time
  – Late-career role changes
• Transfer critical institutional knowledge and experience
  – Specialize role knowledge capture
  – Wisdom worker shadowing

Call to Action for Third Age Nurses

• Stay engaged…
• Keep current…
• Be unafraid…
• Communicate ideas…
• Be creative…
• Take the lead!!!!

QUESTIONS?

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References

- The U.S. Nursing Workforce: Trends in Supply and Education (2013) Health Resources and services Administration: Bureau of Health Professions