**Development of a Preceptor to Preceptor Handoff Tool**

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**INTRODUCTION**

- SBAR stands for Situation, Background, Assessment and Recommendations. Designed to standardize communication by reducing misunderstandings and frustration caused by differences in communication styles, SBAR is considered a best practice by both Joint Commission and International Health Institute (The Joint Commission, 2015).

- Standardized handoff tools have been shown to facilitate complete communication during shift report (The Joint Commission, 2015).

- Orientation of new nurses is very costly to employers (Friedman, Cooper, Click & Fitzpatrick, 2011) making strategies for increasing employee retention are essential.

- Orientation of new nurses includes an immense amount of information in a limited amount of time. Communication between preceptors is very important to avoid omissions and duplication, wasting precious time.

- Because of many factors such as; learning/teaching styles, and scheduling challenges, frequently nurses have multiple preceptors during orientation.

- When a new nurse is transferred from one preceptor to another there can be duplication of teaching and the possibility of some information being missed. A handoff tool could ensure more complete report is given to the receiving preceptor, reducing duplication and standardizing the information shared during the orientation program.

- A lack of research about applying SBAR principles to preceptor handoff was found.

- The current research is attempting to show that standardizing communication between preceptors could increase new nurse satisfaction with orientation by creating more positive clinical experiences for new employees.

**METHODS**

- In collaboration with the education department of a 171 bed acute care community hospital, a draft Preceptor SBAR form was developed for use between preceptors during orientation.

- Once content was agreed on by all the educators, the form was presented to a sample of preceptors for feedback.

- The final version of the form was posted to the hospital intranet, and included in the orientation folder for all new in-patient nurses. Education about the purpose and use of the form was given to preceptors during preceptor training courses and to new nurses during unit based orientation.

**RESULTS**

- The current research attempted to show that standardizing communication between preceptors could increase new nurse satisfaction with orientation by creating more positive clinical experiences for new employees.

- A six-month post-implementation review survey showed a general acceptance of the new form, particularly among orientees. Feedback from individual preceptors has been positive but shows inconsistent use due to lack of familiarity with the existence of the new tool.

- Due to lost productivity the cost to a hospital each time a nurse leaves a position is between $40,000 and $64,000 (Theisen & Sandau, 2013).

- “New graduate RN retention in the first year of employment ranges from 25% to a high of 64%” (Friedman, Cooper, Click & Fitzpatrick, 2011).

- One factor that affects the retention and job satisfaction of new nurses is the orientation process (Halfer, 2011).

- Interventions are urgently needed to increase new nurse satisfaction with the orientation process and reduce the number of new nurses changing jobs.

- Use of an SBAR tool to facilitate handoff between preceptor has the potential to increase nurse satisfaction with the nursing process.

**DISCUSSION**

- SBAR as a strategy to standardize communication between preceptors has proven to be useful, however it is in the early stages of evaluation and warrants continued investigation.

**REFERENCES**


The Joint Commission. (2015). @ Home with the Joint Commission. Retrieved from The Joint Commission http://www.jointcommission.org/At_home_with_the_joint_commission/sbar_%e2%80%93_a_powerful_tool_to_help_improve_communication/default.aspx

**CONCLUSION**

- SBAR as a strategy to standardize communication between preceptors has proven to be useful, however it is in the early stages of evaluation and warrants continued investigation.

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