A Fresh Start for Nursing: Unit Practice Councils Capacity Building in Partnership with the Health Foundation of South Florida

Ann-Lynn Denker, ARNP, Ph.D, Beverly M. Fray, RNC, MSN, APRN-BC
Center for Nursing Excellence, Jackson Health System

Jackson Health System

- A large public/academic health system in South Florida.
- On the “journey” to excellence and in pursuit of “Magnet” designation with the support of CHCM, Creative Healthcare Management
- A community partnership with the Health Foundation of South Florida is facilitating this journey through grant support to implement Unit Practice Councils, the foundation of successful shared governance.

Purpose

The Health Foundation of South Florida and Jackson Health System Share a Mutual Pursuit

- Obtain support to advance the professional practice of nursing and nursing care
- Achievement of Magnet designation
- To improve the lives of Miami-Dade’s residents through the improvement of patient care

Method

- JHS requested support from the HFSF in order to develop and implement an organizational-capacity building initiative through the establishment of UPCs in every practice setting throughout JHS. This crucial component of the shared governance model required the resources of planning, education, mentoring, facilitation and coordination.
- A two-year grant from the HFSF is enabling JHS to provide for a full time coordinator, educational workshops for new UPC members and facilitators, evaluation of outcomes and a variety of resources to support the work of UPCs.

Findings

- HFSF grant support has enabled JHS to implement 91 UPCs that function as the voice for clinical staff nurses.
- Successful UPCs require concerted support and mentoring.
- The UPC Coordinator, facilitators, support groups, annual summit, communication network have resulted in:
  - improved performance outcomes for nurse satisfaction and patient satisfaction.
  - UPCs present quarterly to executives to share successful outcomes.

Practice Environment Scale Scores 2008 SW8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 40</td>
<td>Low satisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-60</td>
<td>Moderate satisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 60</td>
<td>High satisfaction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Improvement Example: This unit has surpassed the nation in their Practice Environment Scales except for their perception of the adequacy in staffing and resources. It can be argued, that despite this, they have worked with their resources to benefit patients and themselves, as evidenced by improved patient/staff satisfaction scores.

Job Enjoyment Scores SW8

Future goals

- Strengthen UPCs by ensuring that they are all supported by facilitators, and management.
- Continue UPC Workshops for new members coming into UPCs (succession planning).
- Disseminate an organization plan to disseminate best practices developed by UPCs
- Evaluate and restructure UPCs, as warranted.

Conversations with staff where improvements have taken place bear out the correlations. One Nurse Manager stated, “Since the inception of the UPC, staff are happier, patients are happier and I will do whatever I can to support the UPC … it makes my job easier. The UPC knows the problems, we work together to make the necessary the changes and make a difference.”

UPCs are vital to a true shared governance program for professional nursing practice. Success depends on significant resources, rigorous planning, leadership support, and organizational commitment. The outcomes are extremely rewarding.

Discussions with staff where improvements have taken place bear out the correlations. One Nurse Manager stated, “Since the inception of the UPC, staff are happier, patients are happier and I will do whatever I can to support the UPC … it makes my job easier. The UPC knows the problems, we work together to make the necessary the changes and make a difference.”

UPCs are vital to a true shared governance program for professional nursing practice. Success depends on significant resources, rigorous planning, leadership support, and organizational commitment. The outcomes are extremely rewarding.