Creating an Environment of Learning: Nurses Teaching Nurses
Celeste P. Jones, BSN, RN
UT MD Anderson Cancer Center
Bobbie Wilson, Sharon Hampton

Problem:
The volume of rapidly changing clinical knowledge, time, workload and lack of understanding of evidence-based practice, posed a barrier to nurses in a cancer center PACU in keeping educationally current. A method to increase nurse accountability for education, utilization of research to improve practice and specialty certification was needed.

Evidence:
The literature suggests self-directed learning in nursing education increases confidence, autonomy, motivation, and development of skills for life-long learning (O’Shea, 2003). Ringerman, Flint, and Hughes (2006) found that a peer competency validation model contributed to a more proficient and motivated staff.

Strategy:
An educational program and teaching strategies were developed to involve all nurses. Through an educational committee, nurses learned how to teach and validate yearly competencies with peers. In-services, by the unit’s evidenced-based practice resource nurse, educated staff about finding, reviewing and using the best evidence for practice. Access to on-line institutional and unit library resources was promoted. A Teach-Moments technique was used to assist in certification exam preparation.

Practice Change:
The PACU changed from a nurse leader dominated educational model to one in which nurses shared in identifying, developing and implementing an ongoing program of education.

Evaluation:
After implementation of the educational program and new teaching strategies, all nurses were surveyed about their perception of the changes made. 19 surveys distributed with a 100% response rate.

Results:
Most respondents characterized the PACU as an area conducive to learning. All reported clinical knowledge had expanded as a result of the program. 4 nurses earned specialty certification and 11 planned to take the exam within the next year. One year post implementation, 89.47% of nurses had participated in providing unit education, either by in-service or poster.

Recommendations:
Similar models may be useful in other settings.

Lessons Learned:
Both the Nurses and Management team learned the value of creating an environment conducive to learning, and the importance of the nurse being a primary player in the educational process.
Bibliography


