Developing an Evidence Based Work Culture, Novice to Expert  
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Problem:
This Health Care Organization adopted the Synergy Model as the model for care. Synergy, the “Novice to Expert” model supports optimal patient outcomes because patient characteristics determine which nurse is assigned for care. The Professional Advancement Council (PAC) was challenged to expand its clinical ladder to include all 4 levels from the Synergy model and hard-wire nurse competency in Evidence Based Practice (EBP).

Evidence:
The PAC turned to the Nursing Research Education Committee (NREC) for help. The NREC had already developed opportunities for nurse participation based on a needs assessment study. These included quarterly nursing grand rounds, an annual nursing research and EBP conference, a nursing research apprentice program, and a strong library resource connection for nurses.

Strategy:
The PAC met with nurses to plan. Members of the NREC joined nurses at the meetings that addressed clinical inquiry. A work-group evolved to finalize the plan. Today, there is no guesswork about how EBP is accomplished at each level.

Level I-II: More novice nurses follow clinical practice guidelines (CPGs) and implement changes in the plan of care that are evidence based.

Level III: As nurses advance, they share their knowledge by mentoring others and by contributing to the development of CPGs.

Level IV: At this level, EBP is used to evaluate current practice, to make recommendations for improvement, provide leadership in the development of CPGs, and do original nursing research.

Practice Change:
Implementation of the clinical ladder is our plan for advancing and sustaining an environment in which direct care nurses understand, access, and use EBP, as well as contribute to the new body of evidence through research.

Evaluation/Results:
Nurse engagement in EBP is evident. Measures post-expansion will include a count of nurse promotions, publications, and original research studies.

Lessons Learned/Recommendations:
Professional nurse development is essential for patient care synergy. Expanding the clinical ladder makes several levels of nurse competency clear and is necessary for synergy, best outcomes, and Magnet recognition.
Bibliography: