Preceptor Implications

The findings from these studies have several implications for nurse preceptors and orientation programs for new nurses.

Team work: Nurse preceptors should approach orientation of new nurses as a team function. New nurses are cognizant of group dynamics, and cohesion increases their commitment to the job.

Evaluation: Preceptors can improve their performance by seeking informal or formal evaluative data from their preceptee. Ask you preceptee to give you feedback. Reflect on how you can improve your preceptor role.

Preceptor support: Preceptors need support too! Evaluate your preceptor development program. Identify strengths and opportunities to create new ways to support the critical work of the preceptor.

What’s new in preceptor literature?

The topics of nurse preceptors, preceptorship, orientation and transition to practice remain prevalent in nursing literature. It is good to know that researchers understand its importance and are committed to improving the process. Preceptors are recognized for their valuable contributions to the nursing profession. The process for supporting preceptors needs to continually be assessed. This newsletter includes a synopsis of recent publications that supports the work of preceptors.

Group Cohesion and R.N. Satisfaction

A significant number of new graduates leave their first job within the first year, and an even more feel ready for a change. These issues impact turnover, cost and increased preceptor burden. A recent study was conducted to understand how preceptor role effectiveness and group cohesion affect new graduate nurses’ satisfaction and intent to stay. Bontrager, Hart & Mareno found that preceptor role effectiveness and group cohesion was predictive of new graduate job satisfaction. Further, they found that job satisfaction was a predictor of intent to stay.

Preceptors’ Views of Their Role to Support Nurses

New graduates may experience stress, burnout and difficulty adjusting to practice. Preceptors were interviewed in a recent study to better understand preceptorship issues from the perspective of the preceptor. Preceptors revealed that benefits of the job included pride related to helping new nurses, but expressed stress about getting everything done and the extra workload. They also reported that time was the main challenge, and that preceptor experiences could be improved by protected time. Lastly, preceptors suggested that more support, such as short educational sessions and preceptee feedback, would be beneficial to enhance their role performance (Tracey & McGowan, 2015).

Interventions to Support Development of Preceptors

Nurse preceptors are tasked with the overwhelming job of precepting students, new graduates and experienced nurses starting in new areas. Windley et al. (2015), completed a systematic review to identify interventions that support the development of preceptors. Although a limited body of research was found, some interventions that were helpful include formalized preceptor educational programs, training manuals, monthly seminars, preceptor reflection and mentorship models.

References:


“The true object of education is not to render the pupil the mere copy of his preceptor.” – William Godwin –

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