

A challenge of high resignation rate in Accident & Emergency Department in Tuen Mun Hospital, Hong Kong: A 4 years nursing staff retention program with multi-faceted approach.

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Introduction

Manpower deficiency is always a challenge to many health care settings. The situation is much more serious in many public health sectors in HK. AED/TMH is a busy workplace with daily attendance ranged from 600-750, the workload and stress among staffs is inevitably increased. It turns to a vicious cycle. The resignation rate for nurses in AED/TMH was increased in the years of 2010-2012, ranging from 7.7%-9.2%. A staff retention program with various collaboration works and initiatives was implemented.

Objectives

To explore the root causes of increasing resignation rate;

To foster collaboration with new initiatives to promote retention of staff and increase staff morale;

To decrease the resignation rate from 7.7% to 9.2% to 2% by the end of 2014;

Methodology:

The Deming Cycle was adopted.

PLAN: Root cause analysis: summarized as demographic reason, job nature, working environment, stressful in handling complex cases in AED, incompetence in clinical knowledge etc.; Staff- mix analysis in 2011-14: novice (<1 year, 6-15%), junior (< 3 years, 30-37%) and senior (>3 years, 48-64%)

DO: Developed and reviewed different system e.g. coaching, preceptor-ship program and rotation etc.

CHECK: Assessed the effectiveness and injected new initiatives.

ACT: Executed:

- In-house Trainings for different clinical topics and scenarios.
- Rotation Program for nurses with 2-4 years of experiences from AED to Emergency Medicine Ward (EMW) so as to enhance the clinical skills and knowledge;
- Pilot Coach Program for senior nurses for which a designated Nursing Officer (NO) or Advanced Practice Nurse (APN) was assigned to be the coach and collaborated to work out a project with the nurse to enhance various issues in the department
- 4 months Deputizing APN Program for senior nurses;
- Recognition system to increase staff morale and team spirit.
- Pre-registration coaching to all potential students before graduation to AED: a 5 weeks extra days coaching for all potential students who may work in the department as a staff nurse, so as to strengthen the clinical skills and knowledge and increase their competence.
- Enhancement of the existing “tutor –tutee system”: all staff nurses will be assigned an NO/APN as the coach (tutor) in the particular year. The NO/APN is responsible for the performance, personal growth of their tutees just like a “mother-and-son” relationship.

Results

From 2011-2014: 38 new comers were coached ; 28 nurses finished the Rotation Program with nourishing experiences; 17 senior nurses joined the Pilot Coaching Program and completed 17 projects with satisfactory results; 25 senior nurses completed the Deputizing APN Program and 10 APNs completed the Deputizing Ward Manager Program. Over 10 new graduates were arranged the Pre-registration Coaching Program. The resignation rate was decreased from 7.7%-9.2% during 2010-2012 to 1.4%-2.3% during 2013 to 2014. There was no more nursing staff resignation in 2015 (as of May 2015)

Conclusion

It is hard to change the external environment. However, by initiating different positive changes and collaboration works in the department, the atmosphere and team spirit in the workplace was enhanced and staff wellness was also promoted.