**The Implementation and Evaluation of a Mentoring Program for New Nurse Managers**

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### Introduction
A 250 bed inpatient department in a large academic medical center experienced an 18.3% turnover rate in fiscal year 2016. In comparison, hospital turnover was 13.9% and US turnover was 16.2%. Effective nursing leadership is essential to identify the threat of nurse turnover and to improve the work environment influencing nurse retention rates (Nesley & Brownie, 2012). The authors describe how mentoring and cohort-based learning are effective strategies to prepare new nurse managers in their role.

### Objectives
Implement and evaluate the effectiveness of a mentoring program for new nurse managers (NMs) using the following aims: 1) Determine nurse manager competency gaps, 2) Implement a nurse manager mentoring program resulting in a statistically significant increase in competency self-assessment, 3) Determine program satisfaction, 4) Determine program effectiveness.

### Methods
The New Nurse Manager Mentoring Program (NNMMP) was a mixed methods, pre/post intervention study design using the American Organization of Nurse Executives (AONE) Nurse Executive Competency (NEC) self-assessment tool in the domain of communication and relationship building.

**Setting:** 250 bed inpatient department

**Participants:** convenience sampling (N=8) see Table 1

The NNMMP was conducted in a five phase process:
1. Nurse Manager Competency Gap Analysis
   - Nurse manager AONE NEC self-assessment
   - Staff nurse feedback (surveys and focus groups)
2. Curriculum Development
   - Designed using competency gap analysis.
3. New Nurse Manager Mentoring Program
   - Six group sessions with all nurse managers (2 hours each)
   - Four (1 hour) 1:1 mentoring sessions with program mentor
4. Program Evaluation
   - 10 question survey (1-5 Likert) and 3 open ended questions. Filled out voluntarily by nurse manager participants
5. Program Effectiveness
   - 10 question nurse staff survey (1-5 Likert) and focus groups. Voluntary participation in staff survey and focus groups by staff nurses on the implementation units.

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### Statistical Analysis
All analyses performed using SPSS 24

#### Table 1
Descriptive characteristics of nurse manager participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Characteristics</th>
<th>IQR</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AONE scores pre</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19.25 – 19.75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AONE scores post</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9.5 – 14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AONE summary score</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>81.5 – 86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Leadership Training Experience (%)
- Highest education level: 45 (50%)
- MSN: 4 (50%)
- Manager Cohort Training: 7 (85.7%)
- Academic relationships: 7 (85.7%)
- Nurse Leadership Academy: 7 (85.7%)
- Manager Cohort Training: 7 (85.7%)
- Post (N=8) pre/post summary scores for individual nurse managers (Figure 1.)

#### Aims

**Aim 1: Gap Analysis**
- Lowest scoring AONE subdomains:
  - Community involvement (median 7.5 out of 25)
  - Academic relationships (median 19 out of 40)
  - Effective communication (median 21 out of 40)
  - Relationship management (median 28 out of 35)
- Lowest scoring AONE summary scores (N=135)
  - Felt supported during program (88% strongly agree, 12% agree)
  - Program would be helpful for future NMs (100% strongly agree)
  - Program was helpful with my job (100% strongly agree)
- Highest scoring questions:
  - Offers support, feeling of not being alone (median 7 out of 8)
  - Creates trust in the environment (median 7 out of 8)

**Aim 2: Comparison of Nurse Manager pre/post AONE summary scores**
A related samples Wilcoxon Signed-rank test was performed comparing pre and post program summary scores. No statistical significance was found in scores preprogram (median=144, interquartile range (IQR) -70-184) and post program summary scores (median=153.5, IQR=116-181), p=0.325.

**Aim 3: Program Evaluation**
Quantitative (N=8), 10 questions, Median 48, IQR 45.5 – 49

**Aim 4: Program effectiveness assessment**
Quantitative Data (Summary scores 30-50)
Based on: 1-5 Likert (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree)
- Pre (N=83): Median 45, IQR 39-50
- Post (N=122): Median 46, IQR 38-50
- Mann-Whitney U Test: p > .05 (2-tailed)

#### Translational and Dissemination
- Nursing staff development
- Nurse manager development
- Manager and mentor training
- Recommendations for practice

### Conclusion
NNMMP was positively received by NMs. The NMs appreciated case studies and “real life” scenarios. They valued peer and mentor support. Staff nurses were able to identify positive changes in NM behavior post implementation. This study informs future nurse manager orientation programs by outlining the mentoring support and resources that nurse managers require for their professional development. The study also identifies behaviors staff nurses value in a nurse manager. Research supports that a healthy work environment improves nurse satisfaction, nurse retention, and patient outcomes. Effective leadership and mentoring are controllable influences that can impact engagement and retention of nurses.

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