

WHITE PAPER ON NEW NURSE RESIDENCY PROGRAMS

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Greater New York City Black Nurses Association
Council of Associate Degree Nursing in New York, Inc.
Philippine Nurses Association of New York, Inc.
New York State Council of Perioperative Registered Nurses
The New York State Council of Deans and Directors
New York State Association of School Nurses
The New York League for Nursing

OVERVIEW

Nurse residency programs are needed in New York State. It is widely recognized that nurse residency programs prepare nurses to be more confident, competent, and practice ready. As nurse residency programs have become more widespread, it has become apparent that all newly licensed nurses, regardless of educational preparation, should participate in a standardized, accredited nurse residency program. In fact, Recommendation 3 of the Institute of Medicine Report (2010) states, “State boards of nursing, accrediting bodies, the federal government, and health care organizations should take actions to support nurses’ completion of a transition-to-practice (nurse residency) after they have completed a prelicensure degree program....” Standardized, Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) accredited nurse residency programs are imperative for ensuring the future vitality and sustainability of the nursing

profession. Nurse residency programs will help to increase retention and reinforce nonclinical competencies that are crucial to the success of a nurse and the health care delivery system.

Nurse retention is one of the major concerns for health care systems today. Improving nurse retention within health systems is imperative to reduce the stress for all workers in a work environment, is cost-effective, and enhances staff morale. Increased nurse retention will allow facilities to avoid the higher costs associated with replacing employees and has been proven to improve the overall quality of care of patients and communities. Newly graduated nurses are often overwhelmed as they transition into the nursing workforce. Without support, encouragement, and socialization into the profession, nursing graduates find it challenging to develop into confident professionals, which can quickly lead to burnout and changes of employment, or even profession (Walsh, 2018).

Nursing leaders generally assign a lower rank to new nurse competency in nonclinical skills, such as the ability to work as a team member, communication with interprofessional team members, and delegation, as compared to clinical skill competency (Berkow et al., 2008). These limitations potentially impact patient outcomes, job satisfaction, retention, and professional development of new nurses transitioning to professional practice from academia. Clinical preparation, as provided in a nurse residency program, is critical for new nurse graduates to succeed. Recently, because of COVID 19, health facility closures, and other factors, decreased clinical placements for nursing programs across New York State have limited the opportunities for nursing students to gain these competencies.

NURSE RESIDENCY PROGRAMS

Nurse residency programs are designed to enhance new nurse graduates' knowledge and hands-on experiences in an apprenticeship style (Cadmus et al., 2021). Nurse residencies are

similar to physician residency programs that familiarize the participant with specific procedures, policies, and techniques related to their area of practice and typically last between six and twelve months from initial hire. Nurse residency programs aim to improve confidence, create bedside care leaders, move participants to autonomous practice, improve critical and clinical thinking skills, recruit and retain new graduates, and understand outcome data to promote patient safety and improve the patient experience.

Currently, nurse residency programs can be found across New York State. They can be found in specialty inpatient areas such as Emergency Department, Surgical Care, Intensive/Critical Care and Medical/Surgical. Home health care agencies have also begun to offer nurse residency programs to recruit staff and retain them in this practice area. Nurse residency programs exist for both RNs and LPNs and can prove effective in acute and nonacute practice settings.

The key to nurse residency programs is the blending of direct patient contact, inter-professional collaboration, and expert nurse preceptors to guide and mentor new graduates. Organizations already offering nurse residency programs also need to consistently evaluate the effectiveness of those programs. Intentional inclusion of inter-professional collaboration in modules during nurse residency programs has produced outcomes such as improved patient care (O'Daniel & Rosenstein, 2008), enhanced job satisfaction and retention (Nair et al., 2012), and assistance in the professional development of new nurses (Hopkins & Bromley, 2016).

Benefits for patients from a residency program:

- Stable care environment
- Improved care outcomes

- Evidence-based care
- Increased safety

Benefits for nurses from a residency program

- Increased competence and confidence in decision-making
- Improved professional commitment and satisfaction
- Reinforced ability to apply evidence-based practices
- Enhanced clinical nursing leadership and communication skills
- Strengthened critical thinking through enhanced decision-making and clinical judgment (AACN, n.d.)

Benefits for the organization from a residency program:

- Enhanced nurse satisfaction and team dynamics
- Reduced staff turnover
- Improved efficiency and safety
- Enhanced nurse morale
- Reduced team stress

CURRENT ENVIRONMENT

One model for a residency program was developed jointly by Vizient® and the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN). “The Vizient/AACN Nurse Residency Program ® (hereinafter “Vizient”) delivers the industry’s most trusted and timely insights to help manage and align an institution’s care teams for high-quality, efficient patient care” (AACN, n.d). The Nurse Residency Program is a data-driven solution which allows participating organizations to focus on retaining new nurses. The program offers a widely accepted curriculum, the ability to

benchmark a participant's performance against that of select peers, and opportunities to network with others in the Nurse Residency Program (AACN, n.d). An example of the application of Vizient in New York City is the *Citywide Nurse Residency* program, which is being offered in partnership with the Greater New York Hospital Association, NYU Langone Health, and New York-Presbyterian Hospital. The residency program provides newly hired, first-time nurses with on-the-job training through a curriculum that focuses on topics including ethics, decision making, clinical leadership, and the incorporation of research-based evidence into practice. The program also provides new nurses with support and mentorship proven to enhance nurse satisfaction, performance, and retention (NYC Health &Hospitals, 2018).

The following New York City hospitals are participating in the program:

- BronxCare Health System, Brookdale University Hospital, Interfaith Medical Center, Kingsbrook Jewish Medical Center, Mount Sinai Brooklyn, Mount Sinai Hospital, Mount Sinai Queens, Mount Sinai St. Luke's, Mount Sinai West, Maimonides Medical Center, New York Presbyterian Queens, and New York Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist
- NYC Health + Hospitals: Bellevue, Coney Island, Elmhurst, Harlem, Jacobi, Kings County, Lincoln, Metropolitan, North Central Bronx, Queens, Woodhull, Carter, Coler, Gouverneur, McKinney, Seaview, Gotham Health, Correctional Health (NYC Health &Hospitals, 2018)
- St. Barnabas Hospital Systems

Stony Brook University Hospital, a large teaching hospital located in Suffolk County, Long Island, and part of the State University of New York system, also has a well-established residency program that is accredited by CCNE. The previous coordinator of this program,

Collette Marran, MSNEd, RN, reported on June 2, 2022, that one of the major goals of the residency program was to provide the new graduate nurse with the support and encouragement that they needed to develop greater resilience and to assist them to have a smoother transition into the new role. This residency program lasts 12 months and includes weekly classes as well as a required quality improvement project. The program currently has 9 cohorts in progress with an average of 35 nurses per cohort. Vizient is used for the residency program, and they provide regular surveys for the participants to specifically identify what the nurses in the program are experiencing in their new roles. The coordinator of the program reported that stress is always a typical response, but the program has helped the nurses to deal more effectively with stress.

New York City Health and Hospitals (NYCH&H) has enrolled over 1400 new hire/new graduates as part of the citywide program and graduated over 500 since 2019. NYCH&H launches new cohorts every three months and has eight active cohorts at any given time. The program lasts 12 months with monthly seminars which include critical reflection and completion of an evidence-based practice project using the Iowa Model. Successful completion of the program is incentivized in the clinical ladder program to support participants' professional growth.

ARGUMENTS FOR PROMOTION OF STATEWIDE NURSE RESIDENCY PROGRAMS

Nationally, 33% of new graduates leave their jobs within 2 years; however, new graduates who participate in nurse residencies leave at a rate of only 5 – 10% (Buerhaus, 2021). Another source estimates that 35% to 60% of new nurses leave their first place of employment within the first year of hire (Van Camp & Chappy 2017). The significance of turnover on a

health system is that it causes disruption to the flow of staffing processes, managerial processes, and hospital revenue. It is very costly for a hospital to recruit and orient new employees.

According to Kester et al. (2019), the cost to replace a nurse is on average \$52,100 per nurse replacement. Losing just one nurse can cost a New York City hospital up to \$100,000 (NYC Health & Hospitals, 2018). The cost of implementing a year-long new nurse residency program is offset by more than 300% by the reduced turnover alone (Knighten, 2022).

As external pressures are limiting student clinical experiences and national nurse retention rates are decreasing, the nursing profession and hospitals must look to strategies that will help promote advancing clinical expertise as a new nurse transitions to an initial clinical environment. A standardized, accredited, comprehensive nurse residency program will promote enhanced resilience, improve job satisfaction, and increase retention of new nurses. While a nurse residency program is not a replacement for adequate clinical nursing education as provided in a pre-licensure nursing program, a formal nurse residency program compliments the formal academic program. A standardized, accredited nurse residency program provides additional opportunities for new nurse graduates to develop their professional communication skills and critical thinking abilities, provides a more structured orientation program, and ultimately leads to the development of enhanced competence and confidence in practice (Walsh, 2018).

The Future of Nursing 2020-2030 report emphasizes the importance of health equity for all and self-care for nurses which Vizient includes as an integral part of the new nursing role. Health equity and self-care are reinforced in nurse residency programs and can include such elements as bridging medical and social needs; stress reduction; nutrition guidance; opportunities for exercise, rest, and relaxation; and the development of friendships and other support networks.

For nurses to provide effective care to patients, they need to first feel healthy, well, and supported, so they can leverage their own power (FON, 2020, p.2).

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is very important to keep in mind that nursing education programs vary in their preparation of nursing professionals, and a nurse residency program will help to enhance and build a strong, cost-effective foundation for the new graduate. There must be an overall statewide commitment on the part of the State and health care institutions in New York State to help implement and fund nurse residency programs. To be successful, these nurse residency programs need to focus on recognizing and incorporating the following factors:

- The program has the educational and technological resources and equipment to meet the intended objectives;
- The institution acknowledges the three-fold return on investment for a nurse residency program;
- The institution has nurse educators and trained preceptors who are qualified to develop and implement a specific residency program;
- The institution follows processes that are a part of established residency experiences and earns CCNE accreditation;
- The institution intentionally designs, integrates, and promotes interprofessional collaboration during the residency experience;
- The institution initiates a creative scheduling model during the residency experience that promotes retention of new nurses;
- The institution incentivized professional growth with completion of the program; and

- The health care institutions receive financial compensation from government agencies and third-party payers based on the initiation of a nurse residency program with measured outcomes compared to established benchmarks to support this evidence-based resource.

A consistent and comprehensive nurse residency program will provide a more structured transitional experience for new nurses in New York State, better supporting them for their future nursing practice, and ultimately increase the retention of these nurses.

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