Creative and Sustainable Ways to Address Staffing Issues

Challenges in Staffing in a Post Pandemic World

Melissa Devine, MCN, RN, CNL
Kathleen Hastings, BS, RN, IBCLC
Meaghan L. Smith, MSN, RN
Faye Weir, DNP, RN-BC, NEABC
February 9, 2023

Objectives

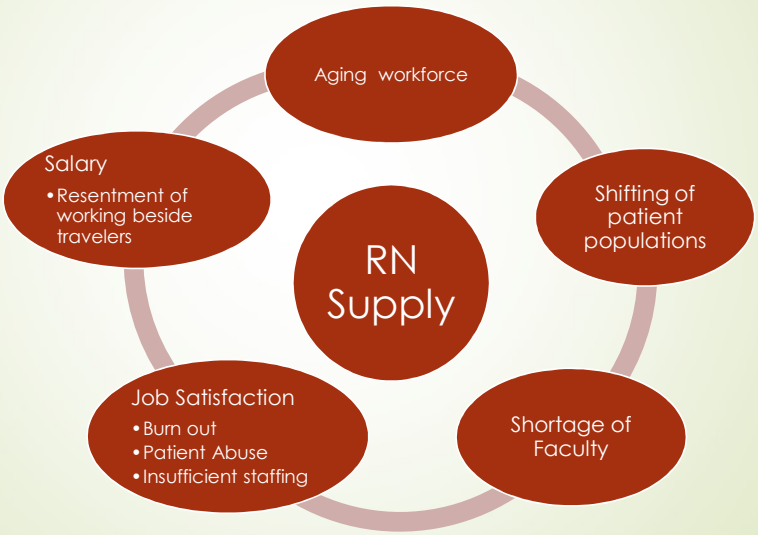
- Understand the changing landscape of Registered Nurse employment across the US and within the NNEPQIN states
- Establish common understanding of issues related to Registered Nurse retention and turnover
- Define strategies to create flexibility and competency for staffing need

We know….

- As of Feb 2021, Registered Nurses was the fifth most-in-demand job in the US workforce
- Growing populations of seniors requires more health services due to age-related conditions
- Nursing's ability to effectively and empathically communicate with clients has a heavy influence on the patient experience
- Nurses are key in patient/client education to prevent readmissions and improve a client's knowledge of their individual health care needs

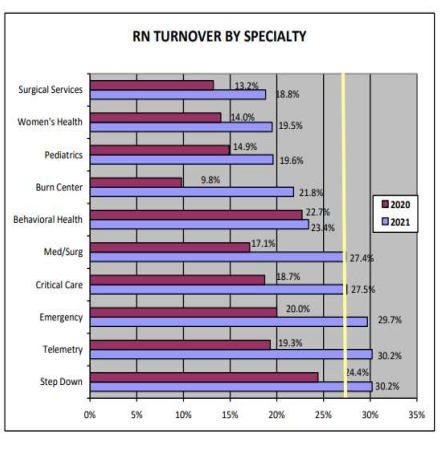
So, why aren't hospitals hiring nurses?

Cycle of issues impacting RN supply and demand



National Turnover / Vacancy data

(NSI National Health Care Retention & RN staffing Survey, 2022)

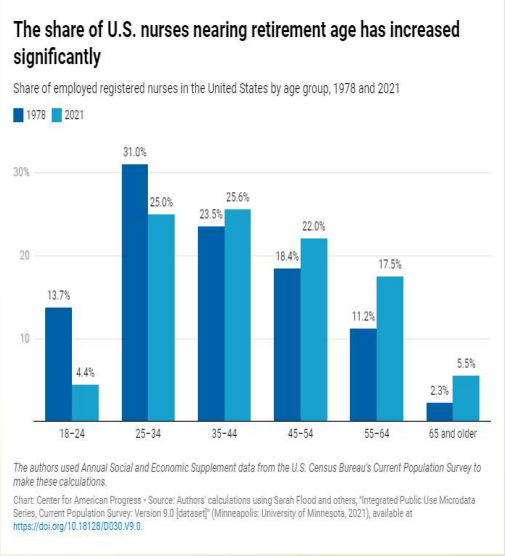


- Survey data from 2021, including 272 hospitals in 32 states, covering over 580,00 health care workers
- Average costs for RN turnover is $46,100 in 2021
- National average of 27.1% turnover rate
- More than 60% have an RN vacancy rate over 15%
- Ranges of Turnover rates based on specialty
- Other allied health care providers range from a low of 10% for pharmacists to a high of 38% for PCTs

"Essentially, every five years, these departments will turn over their entire RN staff"

RN Supply and Demand

- **Aging workforce** impact of those choosing to leave nursing:
  - Average age of RN is 52 years old
  - Projected overall shortage is 1.1 million nurses by end of 2022
  - Nearly 32% plan to retire or leave field altogether
  - Nurses above 65 are 19% of workforce
    - Projection of over 1 million retired by 2030



RN Supply and Demand

- **Shifting of Patient Populations**
  - Aging of population – by 2034, there will be 77 million people age 65 and older compared to 76.5 million less than 18
  - Increased need for geriatric care and chronic disease care
  - Increased need for nurses in all settings, especially in the community/home
- **Shortage of nursing school faculty**
  - In 2020, over 91,000 qualified applications were turned away
  - Clinical placement shortage
  - Diversity of faculty continues to be a concern where shifting of the RNs have become more diverse. Critical for recruitment, retention of students.

RN Supply and Demand

- **Job Satisfaction** (NSI Health Care and Retention Report)
  - 44% cite burnout and high stress environment contributing to job dissatisfaction
  - 65% said they've been verbally/physically abused by patients/families within last year
    - Non-Caucasian nurses have experienced patients refusing care from them
    - 32% said they've experienced racism at work
  - Frustration with COVID guidelines (52%) and staffing/care (47%)
  - Insufficient staffing during pandemic increased stress
  - 29% wanted to leave the profession in 2021 compared to 11% in 2020

RN Supply and Demand

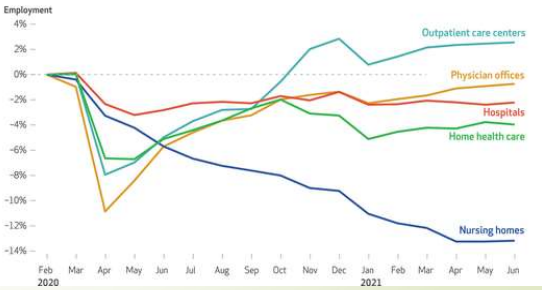
- **Salary**
  - Increased resentment of working next to traveler nurses (86%) so why not leave?
  - 75% of respondents to hospital survey said they have experienced increase use of travelers to address staffing gaps
  - RNs leaving for higher paid travel positions (nat'l RN salaries is $37.21/hour)
    - Nurses leaving for travel positions causes increased vacancy rates
    - Pay rates for travelers rose 67% from Jan 2020 to Jan 2022, with hospitals having to pay 28-32% above those to the staffing firms. Some hospitals paying $240 / hr.
    - CAVEAT: Travel agencies have cut both salaries and stipends to their nurses resulting in some class action lawsuits (at will contracts)
  - For comparison, average weekly wages (40 hr week):

State	RN wages	Travel RN pay	Difference
Maine	1416	3374	1958
New Hampshire	1505	3304	1799
Vermont	1145	3451	2006
National averages	1591	3204	1613

Impact of Pandemic on nursing employment

- Significant changes in turnover and vacancy rates from 2010 to mid-pandemic:
  - Median for overall RN turnover was 13.1 % compared 23.0% in 2021
  - Median bedside RN vacancy rates was 3.3% compared to 11.7% in 2021
  - Median turnover for ALL employees with less than 1 year was 21.7% compared to 34.7% in 2021
  - Shifting of location of employment

Exhibit 1 Total monthly employment in the US nurse workforce in sectors relative to February 2020, 2020–21



What about NNEPQIN states?

- Nurse to population ratio by state:
  - For comparison:
    - Highest Nurse to Pt ratios are in the District of Columbia (16.74) followed by South Dakota and North Dakota at 15.95 and 15.16 respectively
    - Lowest are Utah, Georgia and Texas with 7.26, 7.31 and 7.47 respectively
  - New Hampshire: 9.36 employed RNs for every person in state (26th)
  - Maine: 10.56 employed RNs to every person in state (13th)
  - Vermont: 11.21 employed RNs to every person in state (9th)

The Great Resignation

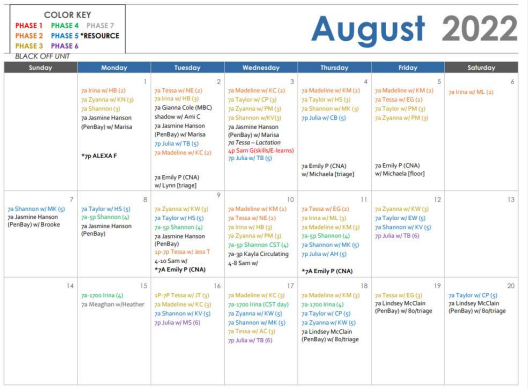
Nurse Burnout

- Joint Commission published a pre-pandemic safety brief related to nurse burnout
- Emergency Care Research Institute (ERCI) identified nurse burnout and it's impact on patient safety as #3 in a top 10 list of patient safety concerns
- Record setting resignation rates between 2021-2022
- Organizational Impact on Nurse Burnout

Panel Discussion:

- A shift from recruitment to retention

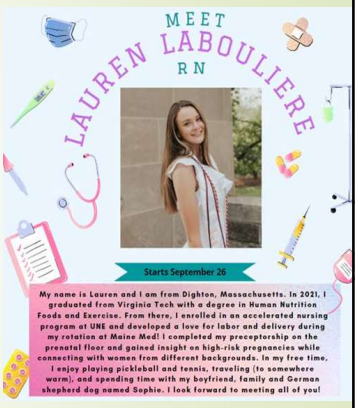
Retention Strategies: Onboarding at MMC



COLOR KEY
PHASE 1 PHASE 4 PHASE 7
PHASE 2 PHASE 5 *RESOURCE
PHASE 3 PHASE 6
BLACK OFF UNIT

August 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 7a Irina w/ HB (2) 7a Zyanna w/ KN (3) 7a Shannon (3) 7a Jasmine Hanson (PenBay) w/ Marisa *7p ALEXA F	2 7a Tessa w/ NE (2) 7a Irina w/ HB (3) 7a Gianna Cole (MBC) shadow w/ Ann C 7a Jasmine Hanson (PenBay) w/ Marisa 7p Julia w/ TB (5) 7a Madeline w/ KC (2) 7a Emily P (CNA) w/ Lynn [triage]	3 7a Madeline w/ KC (2) 7a Taylor w/ CP (3) 7a Zyanna w/ PM (3) 7a Shannon w/KV (3) 7a Jasmine Hanson (PenBay) w/ Marisa 7a Tessa – Lactation 4p Sam Gioiello(E-learns) 7p Julia w/ TB (5)	4 7a Madeline w/ KM (2) 7a Taylor w/ HS (3) 7a Shannon w/ MK (3) 7p Julia w/ CB (5) 7a Emily P (CNA) w/ Michaela [triage]	5 7a Madeline w/ KM (2) 7a Tessa w/ EG (2) 7a Taylor w/ PM (3) 7a Zyanna w/ PM (3) 7a Emily P (CNA) w/ Michaela [floor]	6 7a Irina w/ ML (2)
7 7a Shannon w/ MK (5) 7a Jasmine Hanson (PenBay) w/ Brooke	8 7a Taylor w/ HS (5) 7a-5p Shannon (4) 7a Jasmine Hanson (PenBay)	9 7a Zyanna w/ KW (3) 7a Taylor w/ HS (5) 7a-5p Shannon (4) 7a Jasmine Hanson (PenBay) 5p-7p Tessa w/ Jess T 4-10 Sam w/ *7A Emily P (CNA)	10 7a Madeline w/ KM (2) 7a Tessa w/ NE (2) 7a Irina w/ HB (3) 7a Zyanna w/ PM (3) 7a-5p Shannon CST (4) 7a-3p Kayla Circulating 4-8 Sam w/	11 7a Tessa w/ EG (2) 7a Irina w/ ML (3) 7a Madeline w/ KM (3) 7a-5p Shannon (4) 7a Shannon w/ MK (5) 7p Julia w/ AH (5) *7A Emily P (CNA)	12 7a Zyanna w/ KW (3) 7a Taylor w/ EW (5) 7a Shannon w/ KV (5) 7p Julia w/ TB (6)	13
14	15 7a-1700 Irina (4) 7a Meaghan w/Heather	16 1P-7P Tessa w/ JT (3) 7a Madeline w/ KC (3) 7a Shannon w/ KV (5) 7p Julia w/ MS (6)	17 7a Madeline w/ KC (3) 7a-1700 Irina (CST day) 7a Zyanna w/ KW (5) 7a Shannon w/ MK (5) 7a Tessa w/ AC (3) 7p Julia w/ TB (6)	18 7a Madeline w/ KM (3) 7a-1700 Irina (4) 7a Taylor w/ CP (5) 7a Zyanna w/ KW (5) 7a Lindsey McClain (PenBay) w/ Boltriage	19 7a Tessa w/ EG (3) 7a Lindsey McClain (PenBay) w/ Boltriage	20 7a Taylor w/ CP (5) 7a Lindsey McClain (PenBay) w/ Boltriage



Orientation at MMC

ORIENTATION PHASES GUIDELINE

PHASE 1 (24 hours) - Early inductions, admissions, free time

PHASE 2 (96 hours)- Labor low risk, admissions

PHASE 3 (72 hours)- C/S, OR procedures towards end

PHASE 4 (40 hours)- Circulating Week

PHASE 5 (72 hours)- Labor, low & high risk

PHASE 6 (72 hours)- Labor/CS, deliveries with minimal back up

PHASE 7 (36 hours)- Labor/CS, deliveries with full back up

*RESOURCE- first 2 shifts off orientation

Maine Medical Center
MaineHealth

LABOR AND DELIVERY ORIENTATION REVIEW

Employee: Date:

Goals - List areas for improvement/new skills to learn/develop during coming year:	Plan - Identify resources available/needed (education, assistance, tools, etc.) to attain goals.

Comments:

Employee Signature Date

Perinatal Clinical Nurse Educator Date

Patient Centered-Respect-Integrity-Excellence-Ownership-Innovation

Preceptor/Orientee Check-in With CNE

Name: Preceptor(s):
Started Orientation: Completion Date:
Date of Meeting: Week of Orientation:

How many patients are you working with?

Name three things that are going well for you:
1.
2.
3.

Name three things you would like to improve on:
1.
2.
3.

Name three things you would like more education on:
1.
2.
3.

Name three goals you would like to achieve by next meeting/shift:
1.
2.
3.

EPIC/documentation:

Report:

CBO tool progress:

E-Learn Progress:

Needs/wants the following experiences:

Other Comments:

Concerns to be discussed with Management Team:

Patient Centered-Respect-Integrity-Excellence-Ownership-Innovation

Nurse Residency at MMC

Meet with the CNO, fun group activity → Defensible documentation & culture of safety → Changing patient condition simulation

Pressure ulcer prevention & wound care → Diversity, equity and inclusion → Evidence based practice & library resources

Ethics & leadership panel → End of life & palliative care → Patient experience

Precepting basics → Graduation & presentation of EBP

Mentorship Program

Orientation at Concord Hospital

CONCORD HOSPITAL

The Family Place

Maternity | Gynecology | Pediatrics

Our Philosophy

- We believe that the birth process is a normal, healthy life event.
- We believe that the birth process may occasionally require medical assistance in promoting a healthy outcome.
- We believe that women have a significant influence in healthcare decision making and need to be informed and education in order to make these decisions.
- We believe that women's healthcare needs are unique and change throughout each women's lifetime.
- We believe that women live in families that are self-defined and can include members who are not related by blood or marriage.
- We believe a family-centered philosophy and delivery of maternal-newborn care is important in assisting families with the childbearing experience.

Orientation at Concord Hospital

The Family Place

Maternity | Gynecology | Pediatrics

Orientation Check in

Staff Name: _____ Start Date: _____

First Week:				
Binder	Schedule	Locker	Tour	Mailbox

Check in Notes:

Second Week:				
NRP Schedule	BF education	Check in	BLS card	Glucometer Online test

Check in Notes:

Third Week				
Binder check	Schedule	BF shadow	Glucometer hands on	Infant safety and security

Check In Notes:

Fourth Week				
Binder check	Schedule	SCN Day #1	SCN Day #2	

Check In Notes:

The Family Place

	Date_____	Date_____	Date_____
Experiences / Strengths			
Areas Needing Development			
Goals / Action Plan For Continued Development			
Comments			

Signature: Preceptee Date Signature: Preceptor Date

CONCORD HOSPITAL

The Family Place

Maternity | Gynecology | Pediatrics

THE FAMILY PLACE TEAM WOULD LIKE TO WELCOME YOU TO OUR UNIT. WE BELIEVE YOU WILL ENJOY BECOMING PART OF OUR "FAMILY!"

HELPFUL HINTS

VOCERAS: We use vocera technology to communicate while at work. Please remember to wear your vocera every day that you are on the floor and return it at the end of your shift. When using, please be sure to follow vocera etiquette and be cognizant of those around you while speaking on it.

CELL PHONES: We would like to ask permission to utilize your cell phone as a means to contact you when you are on call.

GROUPWISE: We depend on you checking your e-mail messages frequently as this is the primary source of communication on The Family Place.

STAFF MEETINGS/RN FORUMS: We have staff forums throughout the year on The Family Place where we provide education, discuss practice issues, get updates on the budget, and share any other issues or concerns. The schedule for these will be in your Groupwise Calendar.

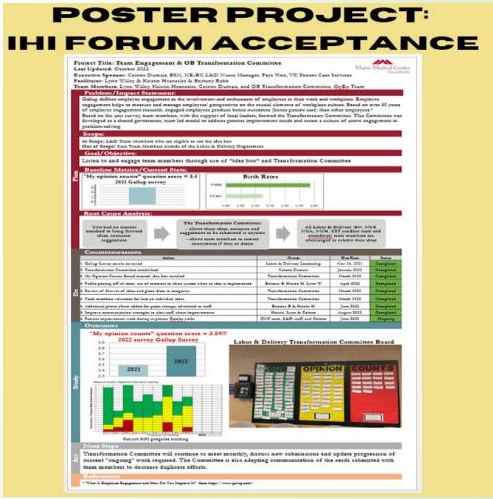
SCHEDULING: During orientation, we request a minimum of 24 hours worked per week. For better continuity, we prefer and suggest that your follow your preceptor(s) schedule. Once orientation is complete, please remember that you are not alone. There are many resources on the unit. Everyone is helpful and adept at answering questions and directing you to the right individuals.

STAFFING NEEDS: The schedule coordinators are Kathy Gullage (days) and Andi Lantiegne (nights). You may sign up for your "ideal schedule," but please remember this is like a "wish list." Every effort is made to accommodate requests, but our primary concern is covering the unit to provide safe patient care. Requests for particular shifts off or vacations need to be sent via GroupWise, no sooner than 6 months in advance, for approval to either Kathy or Andi. All full and part time RN's are expected to work 3 to 4 weekend shifts per month. Every RN is expected to do at least one 12 hour on call shift per month. April Antognoni oversees the On Call schedule. Your preceptor will review with you the "ins and outs" of signing up for your schedule.

EARNED TIME DECREASED WORKLOAD (ETDW): When the unit census is low, ETDW may be granted. From a budgeting perspective, we must flex to volume. This is done on a rotating basis and the RP looks at multiple factors when making this decision. Please review with your preceptor all that is involved in this process.

E:\TFP Education\TFP Orientation\RN Orientation\RN Orientation Paperwork

Retention Strategies: Staff Engagement



Giving staff a voice!

Staff Engagement: The Stay Interview

- Purpose
- Risk vs. Benefit
- Data
- CHANGE!

Stay Interview

Employee: _____ Date: _____

Length of service @ CH: _____

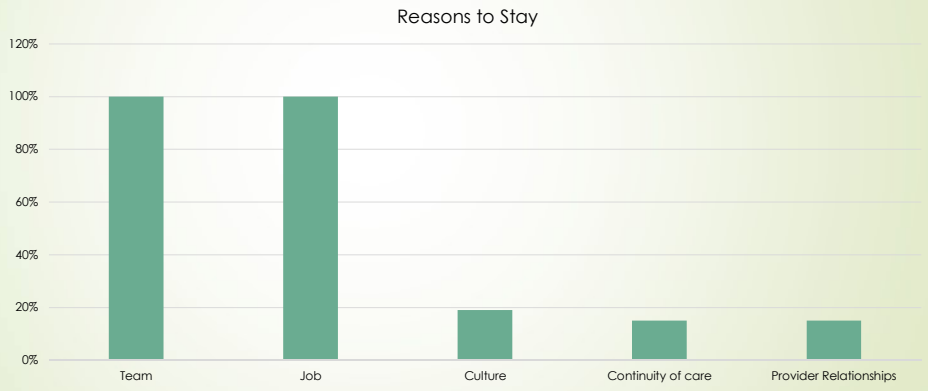
Length of service on FP/Pedi: _____

1. What do you look forward to when you come to work each day?

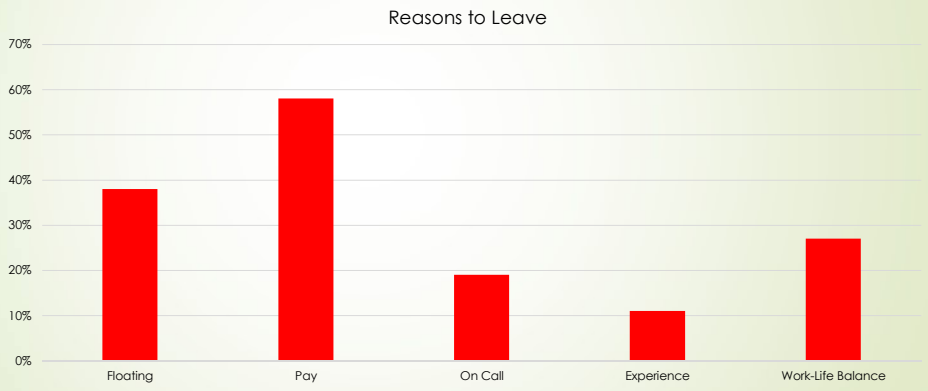
2 What do you like most about your role on the FP/Pedi?

4. If you could change something about your job on TFP/Pedi and within the organization, what would it be?

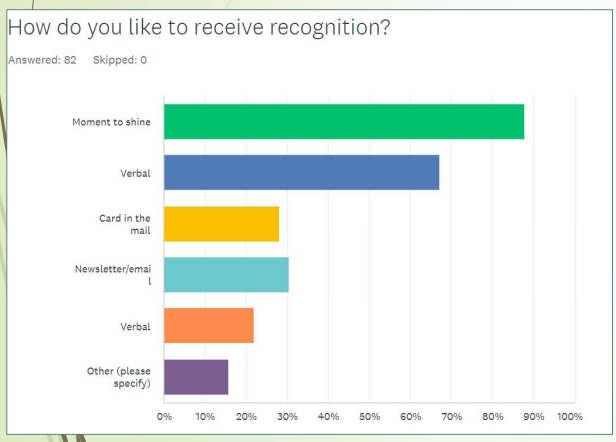
Staff Engagement: The Stay Interview

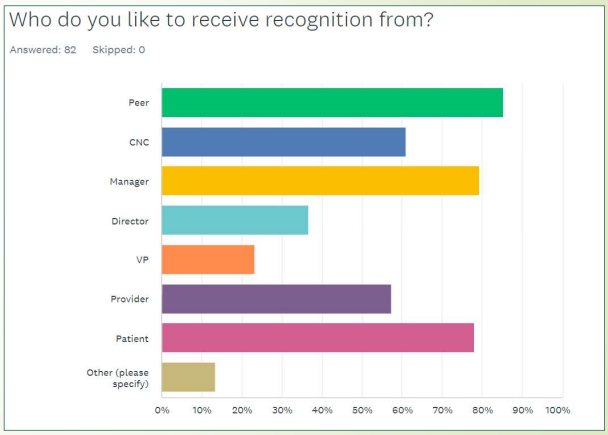


Staff Engagement: The Stay Interview



Retention Strategies: Recognition Survey





Recognition Survey: What does recognition mean to you?

Retention Strategies: Recognition

Retention Strategies: Recognition

Retention Strategies: Recognition

DAISY Award

Awarded monthly to a nurse who demonstrates exceptional caring and compassion. Patients, families, colleagues, and visitors may nominate a nurse. DAISY says, "Thank you!" and recognizes, honors and celebrates why nurses became a nurse – compassionate care and making a difference in patient's lives. To learn more about the DAISY Foundation and the DAISY Award, visit their website.

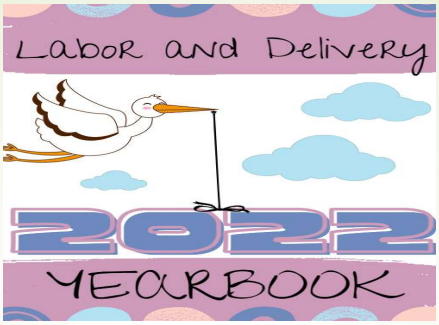
Pick a DAISY

PETAL Award

The PETAL Award recognizes, rewards, and celebrates the special skills and compassionate care provided by our nursing support staff. The PETAL Award recipient demonstrates patient advocacy, leadership, teamwork, and makes a difference in a patient and/or family's life. Nominations are accepted throughout the year and one nursing support staff is recognized each month.

Pick a PETAL

Having fun!


Labor and Delivery
2022
YEARBOOK

HAPPY BIRTHDAY
HAPPY BIRTHDAY

ME-SA CONFERENCE
BUNDLE BIRTH

AWHONN
CONVENTION
Stronger
Together
AWHONN CONVENTION 2022

PHOTOS FROM THE RES REEL!

Superlatives
MOST LIKELY TO GO INTO FULL CHEERLEADER MODE:
HEATHER BRIDGES & LIBBY DAY
MOST LIKELY TO LOSE THEIR CUP
(MORE THAN ONCE):
MICHELLE JENKINS & DANIELLE CONANT
MOST LIKELY TO ACCIDENTALLY SAY SOMETHING INAPPROPRIATE:
SARA CHAPPELL
WHOOPS
MOST LIKELY TO ROLL IN TO REPORT AT 7:10:
DEZ WILLETTE
MOST LIKELY TO LOSE THEIR PHONE:
TAYLOR WESCOTT
MOST LIKELY TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF
UNSUPERVISED FOOD:
JOSH SINKIN
MOST LIKELY TO WRITE A NOVEL
WHILE CHARTING:
CEILE DAY & ZYANNA LEAGUE

FUN!

Recognition: Provider Feedback

Recognition: Patient Feedback

Recognition: Peer to Peer

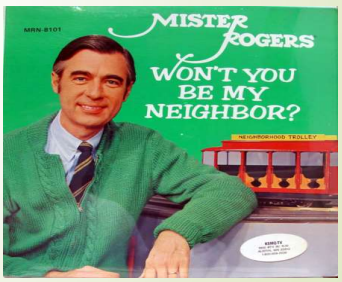
Recognition: Food for the soul!

Recognition: Having Fun!

Retention Strategies in Rural Community Hospitals

Reasons to consider this setting:

- We care for our neighbors.
- Opportunity to deliver more 1:1 care due to lower volumes and acuity.
- Population tends to be low risk and low intervention.
- More work life balance.



Retention Strategies: Regionalization, Collaboration and Education.

- Coastal Health Alliance (CHA), is Pen Bay Medical Center in Rockport, Maine and Waldo County General Hospital in Belfast, Maine and we are part of the Maine Health system. We share resources, staff, equipment, supplies, leadership, education and more…
- Cross Training of Staff (PBMC, WCGH, LH and MMC)
- NRP classes offered between all 3 coastal hospitals (PBMC, WCGH, LH), staff can attend at any site.
- Maine Health/MMC and Simulation Support (MOOSE and MOMS Programs) Education Outreach to support our smaller hospitals.
- Regional Nursing Shared Governance Committee, giving nursing a voice at CHA.
- CHA Staffing Diversion Policy to support sharing of staff across the women's health teams.

Education and Training to Support Staff Sharing

- Standardize Policies, Protocols, Competencies and Skills to support staff sharing between facilities.
- Provide staff an opportunity to orient to the other hospital when it is not under stressful conditions.
- Begin adding this question to your interviews with new staff. How do you feel about floating to another hospital?
- Offer staff trainings at one location and have staff attend together to get to know each other. Then alternate the location next time.
- Knowledge is power and education will build relationships between the teams.
- "Chat with Kat"/Open Office Hours held 2 times a month.

Recognition at CHA

- Recognition at CHA includes:
  - Daisy Awards, RN
  - Sunshine Awards, CNA
  - Moment to Shines
  - Daily Shout Outs at Admin Huddles
  - Positive Patient Feedback from patient experience surveys shared with staff.
  - Clinical Ladders for RN's
  - "Med Rec, Princess of the Week".
  - Lots of Food and Treats! (i.e. ice cream social in the summer, cinco de mayo lunch buffet, Christmas cookie swap, etc…)
  - Promotion through Marketing/Communications, (i.e. donor milk bank)

Celebrations and Fun!

Certified Nurses
And
Nurses' Week

Retention Strategy: work/life balance/generational needs

- Staff need and want work-life balance and will leave to find it
  - Re-evaluate vacation / time off policies if possible
  - Evaluate peek staffing needs and adjust/offer hours to meet the needs
- Evaluate areas that flexibility can be embedded into staffing models
- Cross train to be able to recruit from a broader resource pool
- Floating across hospitals/units
  - Set expectations on hire.

Closing thoughts

References

- (2022, December 20). Map: The pay gap between travel nurses and RNs. *The Advisory Board, Daily Briefing*. https://www.advisory.com/daily-briefing/2022/12/20/travel-nurse-pay#:~:text=Across%20all%2050%20states%2C%20the%20pay%20gap%20between,state%20Source%3A%20U.S.%20Bureau%20of%20Labor%20Statistics%2FVivian%20Health
- Zhavoronkova, M., Custer, Bradley D., Neal, Anona. How to Ease the Nursing Shortage in America. *The Center for American Progress. May 23, 2022.* *https://www.americanporgress.org/artical/how-to-ease-the -nursing-shortage-in-America/*
- *The US Nursing Shortage: a state-by-state breakdown. Nurse Journal. Sept 29, 2022*
- *Bernstein, Lenny, As covid persists, nurses are leaving staff jobs – and tripling their salaries as travelers. The Washington Post, December 6, 2021,* Nurses are leaving staff jobs during covid and tripling salaries to travel - The Washington Post
- *NSI National Health care Retention & RN staffing Report, NSI Nursing Solutions, Inc.* NSI_National_Health_Care_Retention_Report.pdf (emergingrnleader.com)
- Laskowski-Jones L, Castner J. The Great Resignation, Newly Licensed Nurse Transition Shock, and Emergency Nursing. J Emerg Nurs. 2022 May;48(3):236-242. doi: 10.1016/j.jen.2022.03.010. PMID: 35526870.
- Finnegan, R. (2015). *The Stay Interview* ([edition unavailable]). AMACOM. Retrieved from https://www.perlego.com/book/727953/the-stay-interview-pdf (Original work published 2015)
- US Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Occupational Employment and Wages, May 202. Accessed 1/31.23.* Registered Nurses (bls.gov)
- The 2021 American Nursing Shortage: A Data Study (usa.edu)