A Successful Nurse Externship Program in an Inpatient Blood and Marrow Transplant Program

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Medical College of Wisconsin Joint Blood and Marrow Program

- Joint Comprehensive Clinical Program
  - Separate Adult and Pediatric Campuses
- Adult and Pediatric Services
  - Autologous
  - Allogeneic
  - Related and Unrelated
  - Matched and Mismatched
  - Cord & Haploidentical
  - NMDP Collection Center (Adult BMT Program)

Adult BMT Numbers
Background

- Current nursing programs do not offer curriculum focused on blood and marrow transplant
- Blood and marrow transplant nursing is an evolving specialty, demanding dedication and expertise
- Our program allows nursing students the opportunity to experience our specialty

Background

- Over the past 15 years, our program has hired 17 senior baccalaureate nursing students into our nurse extern program

Nurse Extern Requirements

- State of Wisconsin Nursing Assistant Certification
- Currently enrolled in an accredited School of Nursing or graduate of an accredited School of Nursing waiting to retake the NCLEX Exam
- CPR certified
Nurse Extern Requirements

- Minimum experience of two acute care medical-surgical clinical rotations
- One or more clinical experiences must have included medication administration
- Six months or more experience as a nursing assistant is preferred

Nurse Extern Orientation

- Approximately 16 classroom hours of orientation
  - Epic (EHR) training
  - Review of job description
  - Validation of competency in specific skills
  - Medication Administration competency
- 12 weeks of clinical orientation under the direct supervision of a RN preceptor

Clinical Orientation

- Hired as full-time employees
- Orientation is June – August
- Once orientation is over their status is changed to optional part-time (per diem) Patient Care Technicians
- Goal is to hire as GNs upon graduation
Clinical Orientation

• Providing direct patient care allows the NE to:
  – Learn basic nursing skills
  – Gain experience in our specialty

• The unit educator meets with the NE and preceptor weekly to:
  – Discuss progress
  – Set goals for the next week
  – Provide feedback and mentorship

Results

• 30% of our current RN staff have come through our externship program

• Our length of RN employment ranges from <1 year to 28 years
  – 10 year average

• 5 year retention rate is 95.2%

• 5 year turnover rate is 3.9%
  – National Average is 16.5%
Results

- 75% of our staff are BSN prepared
- 63% are Oncology Certified Nurses
- 19% are Bone Marrow Transplant Certified Nurses

Discussion

- Giving students the opportunity to experience blood and marrow transplant nursing in a controlled setting has allowed for smoother transitions into the role of RN, allowing for shorter new nurse orientation
- The opportunity of working with experienced blood and marrow transplant nurses provides new nurses with the tools and support needed to be successful in a challenging specialty

Thank You!