

Nursing nurse  
leadership should  
review it often to



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Nursing leadership are faced with a shortage of clinically prepared nurses as well as a struggle to retain experienced nurses. Some of the problems nurse leaders face are new graduate nurses require extensive training and education to prepare them for the role of the bedside nurse and the lack of experienced nurses applying for acute care positions. As a result, hospitals are faced with a staffing problem resulting in higher nurse patient ratios which lead to increased nurse burnout and job dissatisfaction (Twigg, & McCullough, 2014). In order to address the nursing shortage, nurse leaders should plan measures to address a variety of issues surrounding the nursing shortage. Looking for creative new ways to recruit and retain staff and improve work environments need to become a priority. Once a plan is developed, nurse leadership should review it often to keep ahead of any planned staff losses or other factors affecting hiring and retention.

After review of hiring trends, nurse turnover, and a review of the local area, the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats will be discussed. This paper will discuss a strategic plan to improve staffing at the local hospital and will focus on nurse retention, education, improving work environment, and marketing strategies to improve nurse staffing levels at the local hospital and will identify stakeholders in the process. Strategic Planning      A strategic plan has been developed to address the nursing shortage. The main goals are to improve nurse retention, education, and improving work environment, and develop marketing strategies to aid in competition with other local healthcare facilities. The stakeholders involved will be nursing leaders from each nursing department, the hospital's Human Resources nurse recruiters, members of the marketing department, nurse educators, and some representation from

the front-line nursing staff. Meetings with the local nursing schools will be held to discuss a feeder program for a new Nurse Residency program and education requirements. Nurse leaders are included in this group because they experience the difficulties of retention such as finding shift coverage, limited experienced nurse applications, and high turnover rates (Armmer, 2017).

In addition, nurse leaders need to be able to appreciate feedback about the work environment of their units. Nurse recruiters and the marketing department are key in the strategic plan due to resources such as contacts at nursing schools, assistance for job fairs and interviews, and advertisements. Nurse educators are involved to discuss requirements for new hire orientation and improving the program to better prepare new staff and to lead development of a Nurse Residency program to aid in preparing new graduate nurses to perform clinically.

Front-line staff input is important in gathering information as to what factors would help them to decide to stay at the hospital and also to discuss what makes them want to leave. For example, pay and benefits, work environment, and adequately staffed shifts. A thorough assessment of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats was performed and a list compiled by the stakeholders. The strengths include being a diverse facility providing a wide range of services, located near a reputable medical school and near several nursing schools, and up to date electronic charting systems. Some weaknesses are high nurse turnover rate, inadequate shift staffing, deficient staff education or development, no formal orientation program. Opportunities are developing mentor and orientation programs,

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implement staff continuing education and clinical skills courses, improve staff benefits and incentive pay for preceptors. Threats are the two other hospitals within three miles, providing similar services, higher pay at other facilities, adequately staffed shifts, new graduate nurses who are not prepared clinically to perform as a bedside nurse.

The top two priorities will be developing nurse education to include a Nurse Residency program and improve benefits for nursing staff. In order to improve nurse education, efforts need to be made to engage nursing staff upon hire with a formal orientation program and a mentor program. The orientation program and Nurse Residency program is to help new nurses transition into the facility and to ensure clinical skills are adequate to build the confidence of the nurse (Van Camp, & Chappy, 2017). A mentor will be assigned to assist new staff when arriving on the unit and for a resource as training begins and throughout the first year (Twigg, & McCullough, 2014). A review of existing benefits and a comparison of the benefits of competing facilities to identify shortfalls and areas to improve (Twigg, & McCullough, 2014). Nursing staff should receive incentive pay for precepting new staff members, uniform allowances should be added, and other benefits such as access to gym memberships.

Pay and cost of insurance should be reviewed and compared regularly to stay competitive. Conclusion Nurse hiring and retention is an issue that is plaguing most healthcare facilities. Creating a partnership between nurse leadership and front-line staff in order to enhance nursing practice is key to staff retention (Armmer, 2017). It takes constant work and effort starting with nursing leadership to use creative techniques to attract new staff and retain

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existing staff. An environment that is empowering, invested in education and personal growth, and strives to provide the best in pay and benefits to the team will retain staff.

The best asset of a healthcare organization is the experience of the nursing staff. Allowing staff room to grow while providing the encouragement and educational tools to do so is investing in people.