

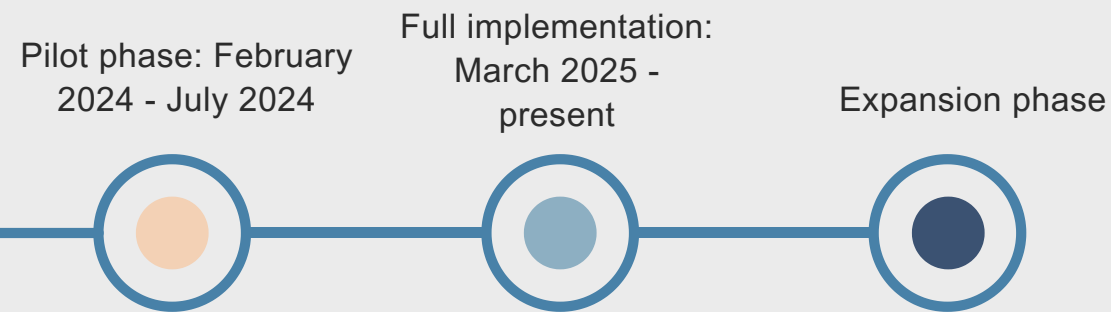
Peer Mentorship Program

Critical Connections: Designing A Peer Support Program for Nurses in the Critical Care

BACKGROUND

- Hiring of new graduate nurses (NGNs) into Critical Care Units (CrCUs) without prior acute care experience increased during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- CrCUs are high-stress environments that contribute to difficult transitions and elevated stress levels for NGNs
- Up to 50% of NGNs consider leaving the profession within two years.
- High turnover and poor retention strain resources and overwhelm Clinical Nurse Educators (CNEs)
- Resulting challenges include inconsistent patient care, weakened team dynamics, and increased staff burnout.

PROJECT TIMELINES



RESULTS

FROM THE PILOT COHORT (N=7)

- 85.7% of mentees became more satisfied with their job;
- 85.7% of mentees felt more mentally prepared for the challenges they might face in the CrCU;
- 57.1% of mentees felt more socially connected in the workplace than before;
- 100% retention among mentees since the start of the program in February of 2024.

PURPOSE

Establish a self-sustaining structured Peer Support Program in the CrCU to improve job satisfaction and team dynamics within a year.

Pair senior nurses with novice nurses, offering psycho-emotional support and professional guidance to provide:

- new nurses, particularly those without CrCU exposure, a smooth adjustment against a demanding work environment;
- senior nurses with work fulfillment through mentorship;
- Patients and their families cohesive care from supported teams;
- the CrCU unit an additional staff retention strategy.

MENTEE TESTIMONY

"I greatly appreciated this initiative, finding it exceptionally beneficial during my transition. My mentor's extensive knowledge, support, and encouragement have been invaluable. They've helped me figure out where I want to go and given me the confidence to get there."



APPROACH

- Develop an operational framework based on critical care guidelines, literature, and a newly qualified nurse transition model.
- Recruit mentors and mentees via posters, emails, and word of mouth.
- Design a training session to teach mentors effective mentoring strategies.
- Tailor program duration and support based on mentees' needs.
- Regular check-ins, tracked progress, interviews and surveys to quantitatively and qualitatively assess mentees' job satisfaction, support, and development.

NEXT STEPS

- Longer program duration: 6 months and above;
- Ensure mentors and mentees have similar work schedules;
- Add monthly activities to facilitate more frequent mentor/mentee communication;
- Hospital-wide expansion in collaboration with other units.

CONTACT

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References