Background & Purpose
Research shows positive direct correlation between certified nurses and good patient outcomes as well as staff and patient satisfaction (Boyle 2017). In light of this, East 5 Neuroscience Unit set a target goal of 34% for nursing certification. In the beginning of 2019, 33.3% of the nursing staff on East 5 held a specialty certification. This percentage dropped to 29.6% by the end of 2019 when a staff left for retirement and another left to transition to intensive care unit leaving a gap of 3.7%.

Purpose
The purpose of this project is to increase the number of East 5 nursing staff with specialty certification from 29.6% to 34% (2 RNs) within one year.

Design & Methods
The Unit Based Practice Council engaged in brainstorming sessions, surveyed the staff, and utilized an A3 project model to:
1. Determine the unit’s goal with regard to specialty certification;
2. Identify and analyze the barriers surrounding the staff’s lack of motivation to obtain certification; and
3. Identify actions and interventions to overcome staff’s lack of motivation to obtain specialty certification.

Results & Analysis
The staff survey revealed that:
1. The staff nurses were not aware which specialty certifications were applicable for the unit;
2. The staff nurses were interested in taking the CNRN (Certified Neuroscience Registered Nurse) and SCRN (Stroke Certified Registered Nurse) exams;
3. Some staff nurses are concerned about the cost of the examination fee;
4. The staff nurses lack the motivation to study and sit for the exam;
5. The staff nurses have a fear for failure;
6. The staff nurses did not know what to study and/or did not want to study alone; and
7. The staff nurses were interested in attending study groups.

East 5 nursing staff were introduced to Fail Safe and Success Pays programs to assist in the reimbursement of the examination fee and address their fear of failure. Three study groups were set and scheduled, all of which to take place at UCDMC. Multiple study materials were gathered, including test prep books, sample test questions, and powerpoint presentations for the group study sessions. In addition, the SCRN test-prep program was purchased from Med-Ed.

Conclusion
Unfortunately, despite all the announcements and these efforts, there was very minimal turnout for the study groups with only one person attending each scheduled study group. In addition, no staff nurse took a specialty certification exam during this time. Hence, our unit’s number of Registered Nurses with specialty certification remains at 29.6%.

Further research is needed to find ways to motivate staff nurses not only to attend study group sessions, but also to sit for the exam. Some staff members have suggested holding the study groups outside of the workplace or having the option to attend virtually, such as WebEx or Zoom. Perhaps asking the nursing staff of their availability (i.e., what would constitute a good date, time and place for them) to attend a study group would be good questions to address next.

References

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