Abstract

Analysis of How Newly-Hired Nurses are Educated to Provide Customer Service

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Abstract

As part of healthcare reform through the Affordable Care Act of 2010, hospitals across the United States are being held accountable for providing a positive patient experience and will lose up to 2% of their reimbursement by 2017 if they fail to reach targeted scores. The purpose of this quality improvement project was to review the process used by a Georgia hospital to educate newly-hired nurses about customer service expectations and to provide recommendations for process improvement. Theoretical foundations supporting customer service included the caring philosophy of Mayeroff; the caring theories of Watson, Leininger, Boykin, and Nyberg; and Roy's adaptation theory. Using the plan-do-study-act model, the project began with a literature review to discover evidence-based customer service strategies. A qualitative evaluation was then conducted of the organizational documents (job description, annual review form, orientation checklists, clinical orientation record, the Standards of Behavior Form) and the educational slide presentations to determine how customer service was presented to new employees. The customer service strategies introduced during orientation and reinforced by the organization in employee evaluations were compared with evidence-based strategies. Improvement recommendations were developed and presented to the 13 nursing leaders of the organization. Materials developed to improve customer service included a poster for display, a tool for examining customer service strategies in hourly rounding, and a performance competency tool to assess nurses' customer service delivery. The project promotes social change by enhancing nurse-patient interactions, improving patients' perceptions of care, and increasing trust between the patients and the healthcare team to improve patient outcomes