

Abstract

Graduate nurses beginning their nursing career require a collaborative relationship with an expert nurse mentor to make this transition successful. However, high turnover among these experienced nurse mentors is causing a problematic gap in knowledge transfer, experience, and expertise in the nursing workforce. This project investigated whether nurse mentors who mentored in a Nurse Residency Program (NRP) remained with the organization longer and were more satisfied with their mentoring experience than nurse mentors who mentored outside of a NRP. The diffusion of innovations theory was used to support the project and process of dispersing information on the outcome of the project. Sources of evidence for the project included case-cohort studies, systematic reviews obtained via an exhaustive literature review, and the collection of nurse mentor retention and satisfaction data through the use of a cross-sectional survey. Data were assessed from 214 registered nurses at a hospital in Rapid City, South Dakota and divided into 2 groups: nurse mentor and NRP mentor. When compared to nurse mentors, 10% more NRP mentors reported being employed in their current position with the intent to remain employed for 10 or more years as well as being very satisfied with their mentorship experience, supporting the project question. This project substantiates the need for experienced nurse mentors to prepare new graduate nurses coming into the profession. Contribution to positive social change is as a result of mentorship in nursing that functions as a means of retaining both new graduate and experienced nurses simultaneously.