

Charge Nurses Utilizing Staff Based on
Their Strengths to Ensure Patient Safety

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An opportunity for a changes regarding charge nurses making staff patient assignments. The process of assigning patients to nurses is an essential part of the charge nurse role and ensuring patients receive timely and appropriate interventions (Cathro, 2016). The charge nurse should utilize the staff in assignments to excel due to strengths in specific areas. Appropriate patient assignments will allow the team to be more competent in the procedure and know patients' needs and the surgeon's needs. During surgeries, some people were not the best person for the assignment was assigned. Appropriate assignments will enable surgeries to run more smoothly while alleviating time for someone unfamiliar with that surgery. Surgical site infections and surgical air contamination may be due to high operating room traffic rates due staff not being prepared for the assignment (Patel et al., 2017).

The literature review for the change projection included articles that showed the importance of charge nurse making appropriate assignments based on staff strength. Cathro (2016) suggest study showed the charge nurse role in patient safety while navigating through chaos. Patel et al. (2017), shows ways to help improve surgical site infections and complications in orthopedic surgeries by reducing traffic in the operating room. Allen (2015) discussed the importance of identifying purpose and decisions when making patient assignments. Spiva et al. (2020) demonstrates the importance of a charge nurses orientation and professional development .

Lewin's change theory was utilized because it reveals unseen problems and negative patterns. This theory is simple and easy to implement and helps encourage change for longevity. The phases that occur in this change include unfreezing, movement, and refreezing. It is essential for staff to unfreeze current processes and perceptions when preparing for the upcoming

change. Positive outcomes of implementing the change will be discussed to allow staff to understand the expected results. Nursing journals and statistics about the positive outcomes from patient assignments based on strengths were shown to show the change's outcomes. People are more accepting of change when there is statistical information and actual results.

The movement phase allows change agents to identify plans and implement appropriate strategies that ensure driving forces exceed restraining forces. Implementation occurs after the unfreezing process is completed. Change can cause fear and uncertainty for staff. Educate staff on the importance of patient assignments to incorporate the staff's strength to ensure patient safety and needs. Staff will learn new behaviors, ways of thinking, and processes. Positive behaviors are encouraged to facilitate staff being more receptive to change and resulting in better outcomes. Communication that is clear and constant is essential for the team as they become more familiar with the change.

Refreezing helps to stabilize the system's change to integrate into the status quo (Marquis & Huston, 2020). The change agent must be sure they will remain involved until the change is completed. During this phase, staff education is an essential part of the change. Staff should be patient and open to new opportunities during the refreezing phase. It typically takes 3-6 months before it will be accepted as part of the system. Desired outcomes can take several attempts to achieve. In the future, the change does not eliminate the possibility of further improvements to the charge.

Charge nurses that was interested in the study that applied and met the criteria attended an interview. The interview consisted of questions about goals and outcomes regarding the

assignment process. Charge nurses asked questions about experiences with a challenging

Table 2. Semistructured Interview Questions

Purpose Questions	Factor Questions
<p>What are your specific goals, or what specific outcomes are you anticipating when you make these assignments?</p> <p>How do you know whether the assignment process met your expectations?</p> <p>When you have concerns or problems regarding N-P-A's, whom do you consult or ask for advice?</p> <p>What kind of feedback do the nurses on the unit give you?</p> <p>What kind of feedback do you get from patients on the unit regarding assignments?</p>	<p>In general, what are the major factors you take into consideration when making N-P-A's?</p> <p>What tools or information do you need to complete the assignment process?</p> <p>From 1 day to the next, what are the major variables that you have to take into consideration when making the N-P-A's on the unit?</p>

assignment and the outcome. Asked to advise to the novice nurse on planning patient assignments (Allen, 2015).

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Planning the change strategy included following Lewin's theory of change to ensure the change was significant. An appropriate strategy was used to ensure driving forces exceed restraining forces. Patient safety and needs were an essential part of the planning process. Data will be complete to document the changes.

This change expected outcomes were ensuring charge nurses were making proper patient assignments based on staff's strength to ensure patient safety. Staff will know the reason this change was implemented. The team should understand the change theory phases and how they are implemented in the current change. Within 3-6 months, staff will accept this change as a part of their new standards.

This change will be stabilized by monitoring the expected outcomes to see if the change is meeting goals. Staff will be able to see the benefits of the change in the work environment. Staff should feel comfortable discussing any concerns or questions with their change agents. This change may take several attempts before achieving desired outcomes. Change agents can follow up with staff on the progress of the change. Overall, auditing the change will determine if the change is headed in the right direction or if modifications are needed.

Patient assignments based on the staff's strength creates a better work environment for everyone. The charge nurse should utilize the staff's strength when making patient assignments. Micromanaging can be alleviated due to the trust and confidence the charge nurse has in staff with their assignments (Cathro, 2016). It is essential to ensure the patient's safety and needs are being met. The charge nurse can build high-functioning teams with this change. The change had expected outcomes that were feasible and within an appropriate time. Lewin's change theory was followed, and the staff is more receptive to positive change. Patient assignments based on the staff's strength creates a better work environment for everyone. Nursing satisfaction can be improved and turn over rate can be reduced by identifying the best unit work teams or the most equitable assignments (Allen, 2015).

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