Implementation of a Standardized Evaluation Tool to Improve Preceptor Confidence

Shunda L. Wilburn, DNP, RN
Troy University, Troy, Alabama (USA)

Background
- The preceptor role is multifaceted and requires unique abilities to accomplish the task of precepting new graduate nurses (NGNs) (Haggerty, Holloway, & Wilson, 2012).
- NGNs clinical transition may be frustrating, discouraging stressful and unclear at times (Thomas, Bertram, & Allen, 2012).
- Preceptors require resources and tools to guide NGN’s successfully into professional practice.
- A standardized tool is beneficial in the evaluation of the preceptee’s progression during orientation (Steffan & Gooding, 2010).

Evidenced-Based Practice Model

The Stetler Model of Research Utilization:

- Preparation
- Evaluation
- Validation
- Translation/Application
- Comparative Evaluation/Decision Making

Purpose
- The purpose of the project is to adapt an evidence-based standardized orientation intervention tool called the Norwegian Nurse Competence Scale (NNCS), implement the tool in the form of a standardized evaluation, and evaluate the effect of the tool on preceptor confidence during NGNs preceptorship.

Sample
- Fifteen Registered Nurses (RNs) who served as preceptors
- Minimum of one year of nursing experience
- Participants were assigned to a medical-surgical unit

Setting
- Two urban hospitals and one community hospital in southeast Alabama
- Not-for-profit organization
- Employs 1,500 nurses; roughly 10% serve as preceptors

Methodology
- Data was collected over twelve weeks
- Recruited 19 preceptors/15 completed
- Consent obtained
- Pre-confidence survey taken by preceptors via SurveyMonkey®
- One-on-one orientation to evaluation tool
- Reminder emails sent to preceptors regarding completion orientation tool.
- Post-survey and instrument evaluation via SurveyMonkey®
- Post survey data was analyzed through IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24.

Key words:
- preceptor confidence, preceptors, new graduate nurses, staff orientation, orientation evaluation tools, and turnover rates.

The RN Weekly Performance Summary evaluated preceptee’s progression through orientation. Seventy-four percent of participants agreed that the tool was beneficial (Steffan & Goodin, 2010). The 10 minute preceptor (10MP) tool served as a guide for interactions. This tool provided a positive transition experience which decreased stress and turnover intentions (Hu et al., 2015).

The Orientation Progress Grading Scale in the Emergency Department was designed to remediate employees not progressing through orientation (Olmstead, Hoskins, MacCartney, & Little, 2013).

C-Scale Tool

- The C-scale was utilized to evaluate preceptor confidence pre and post intervention.
- This tool was originally developed by O’Neill (cited in Grundy, 1993) and used to assess baccalaureate nursing students’ level of confidence while performing dressing changes.
- The tool consisted of five statements with changes.
- Consent obtained
- Pre-confidence survey taken by preceptors via SurveyMonkey®
- Reminder emails sent to preceptors regarding completion orientation tool.
- Post-survey and instrument evaluation via SurveyMonkey®
- Post survey data was analyzed through IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24.

C-scale summary scores revealed an increase in confidence from pre-intervention (M=21.2, SD=2.68) to post-intervention (M=22.86, SD=1.75)

Pre-intervention, individual summary scores ranged from 17-25, indicating mid to high levels of confidence.

Results
- All participants were female.
- Years of nursing experience ranged from one to 36 years, with a mean of 7.47 (SD=10.18) years.
- Preceptors ranged in age from 20-60 years with a mean of 34.13 (SD=12.57) years.
- Ten (66.7%) participants had an Associate Nursing Degree, and five (33.3%) had a Baccalaureate Nursing Degree.
- Eight (53.3%) of the participants had attended preceptor training, while seven (46.7%) did not have any previous preceptor training.
- A paired samples t-test confirmed significance of the improvement in confidence (t(13)= -2.610, p<.05).

Conclusion
- Confident preceptors will aid in the development of competent nurses and have a positive impact on nurse retention.
- “Good preceptors” are crucial due to the current nursing shortage. “Just as every patient deserves a good nurse, every nurse deserves a good preceptor” (Ulrich, 2011, p.225).

Limitations
- Sample size
- The sample only consisted of medical-surgical nurses.
- The study began after the majority of NGNs were hired.