Healthy Environment, Healthy Nurse: Creating and Sustaining a Healthy Work Environment in the CTICU
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PURPOSE
Work environments directly impact nurse retention, patient safety, and burnout among healthcare professionals. Prior to implementing this initiative, this CTICU was historically a tier III unit with a retention rate less than 50% indicating significant action planning was needed to improve work culture and nurse satisfaction. Utilizing the American Association of Critical Care Nurses’ (AACN) standards of a healthy work environment as a guide, the goal of this work culture initiative was to:

(1) Establish and sustain a Healthy Work Environment in a fast-paced, 32-bed Cardiothoracic Surgical Intensive Care Unit (CTICU)
(2) Improve nursing and patient outcomes

BACKGROUND/SIGNIFICANCE
Evidence shows unhealthy work environments contribute to increased medical errors, decreased patient satisfaction, as well as increased conflict and stress among healthcare professionals. The AACN suggests healthy work environments are comprised of the following six essential standards: skilled communication, true collaboration, appropriate staffing, meaningful recognition, effective decision making, and authentic leadership.

DESCRIPTION
Meaningful Recognition
- Years of service breakfast for senior staff
- Recognition gifts for charge nurses, preceptors
- Kudos Board
- Holiday gift baskets for staff working holidays
- Nurses Week gifts
- Newsletter that highlight birthdays, kudos, and professional accomplishments

True Collaboration
- Annual softball tournament for DUHS to raise money for American Heart Association’s Heart Walk
- Food baskets delivered to Heart Center Units
- Interprofessional Rounds

Skilled Communication
- Daily Huddles
- Monthly Staff Meetings
- Monthly Newsletter
- Communication class required for preceptors, charge nurses

Appropriate Staffing
- Utilization of variable staffing plan
- Partnerships with nurse recruitment and HR

Authentic Leadership
- Utilization of nurse manager, clinical lead model

Effective Decision Making
- Interprofessional rounds, including bedside RN
- Data driven model
- Evidenced-based practices utilized

RESULTS

Work Culture Survey Results: FY2014 to FY2016

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall Score</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teamwork</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nurse Satisfaction</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff Recognition</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Turnover Rate from 2014 - 2016</td>
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EVALUATION/OUTCOMES
Staff were asked to rate their overall satisfaction with the unit’s work culture.

After establishing the HWE committee, our nurse turnover rate decreased from 52% in 2014, to 40% in 2015, to 28% in 2016 - indicating an overall 46% improvement in nurse retention. Moreover, we found a 2% increase in our overall work culture score. Specifically, we had a 3% increase in the teamwork score, 6% increase in the nurse satisfaction score, and 3% increase in the staff recognition score. As evidenced by these results, we created a sustainable healthy work environment that increased nurse satisfaction, promoted better work-life balance, and reduced nurse turnover, which in turn should improve patient safety and overall nurse and patient outcomes.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
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REFERENCES