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The Importance of Certification Cost as One Barrier to Certification

Nada Wakim, PhD, RN, NE-BC



Introduction

□ Nursing Certification:

- An acceptable validation of cognitive knowledge and continued competency.
- Instills a sense of pride and accomplishment and has real implications in the practice environment.
- Empowers nurses to positively affect outcomes through the advanced competency and knowledge nursing certification validates.
- Has an inverse relationship with fall rates.
- Improves recruitment and retention of qualified nurses.
- Improves organizational culture of health care delivery, job satisfaction, empowerment and confidence.
- Advances safety, improves processes of care, and quality of care.

Problem

Why then do so many nurses not follow through?

- Perceived and actual barriers to certification can be extremely challenging to healthcare organizations.
- Two major barriers to nurses taking a certification exam were fear and cost.
- The fear was something nurses could work through especially with the support of colleagues who would commiserate with the situation.
- Cost was identified as the most cited barrier to achieving certification.

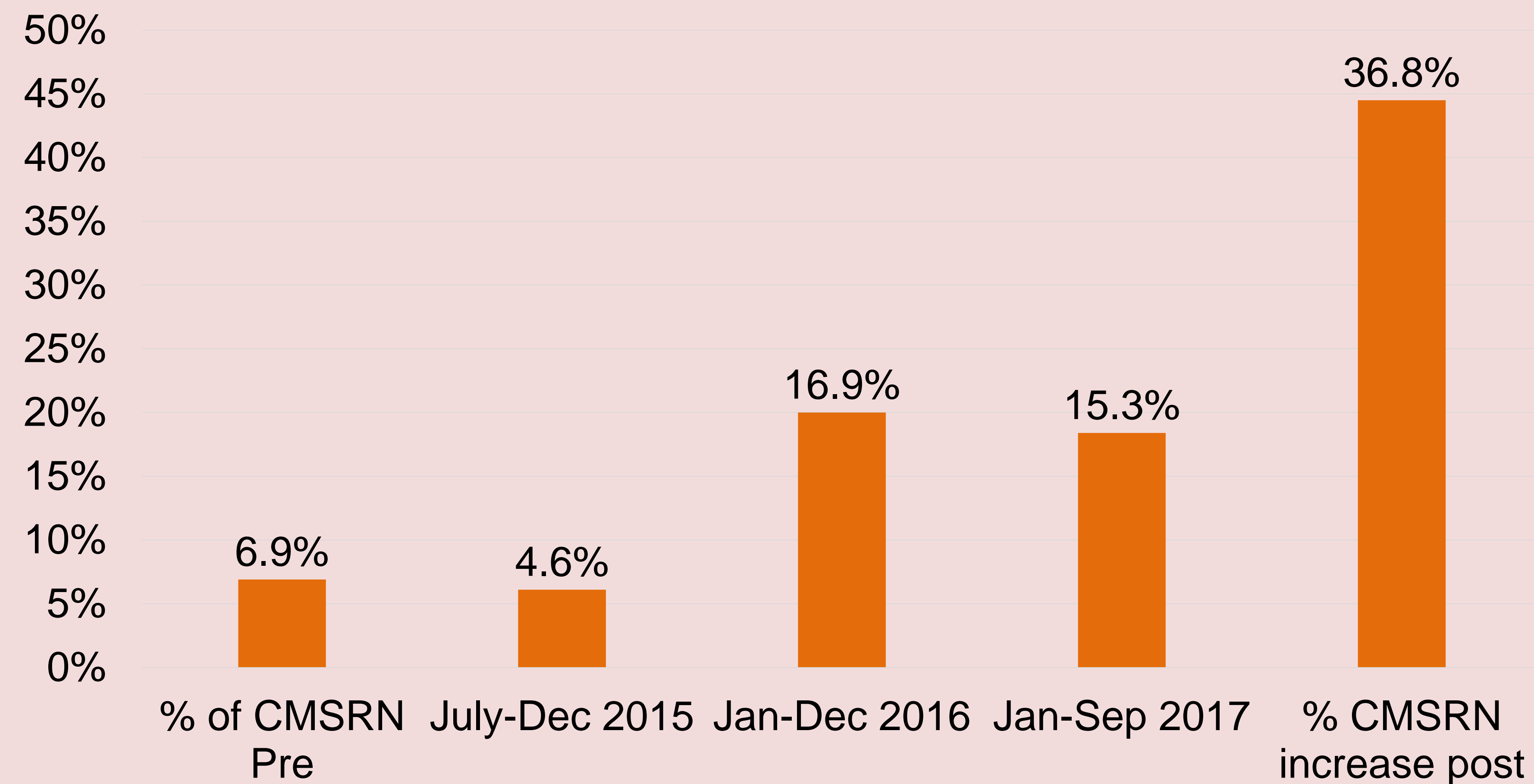
Methods/Project Description

- In July of 2015, a 400+ bed acute care South Florida Hospital, contracted with an external organization to help address the cost barrier.
- The Failsafe Certification Program allowed our facility to remove two main barriers for nurses: fear of failure and upfront cost fees.
- By entering into this agreement, our facility agreed to have at least 10 eligible registered nurses (RNs) to register over the period of the contract year.
- Each RN has the opportunity to attempt the test 2 times. If the RN succeeds on the first or second attempt, the facility will pay the fees. But if the RN doesn't pass either time, no one pays.
- This exciting opportunity for nurses was advertised using email and unit staff meetings, a study group was formed, and materials for review were provided.

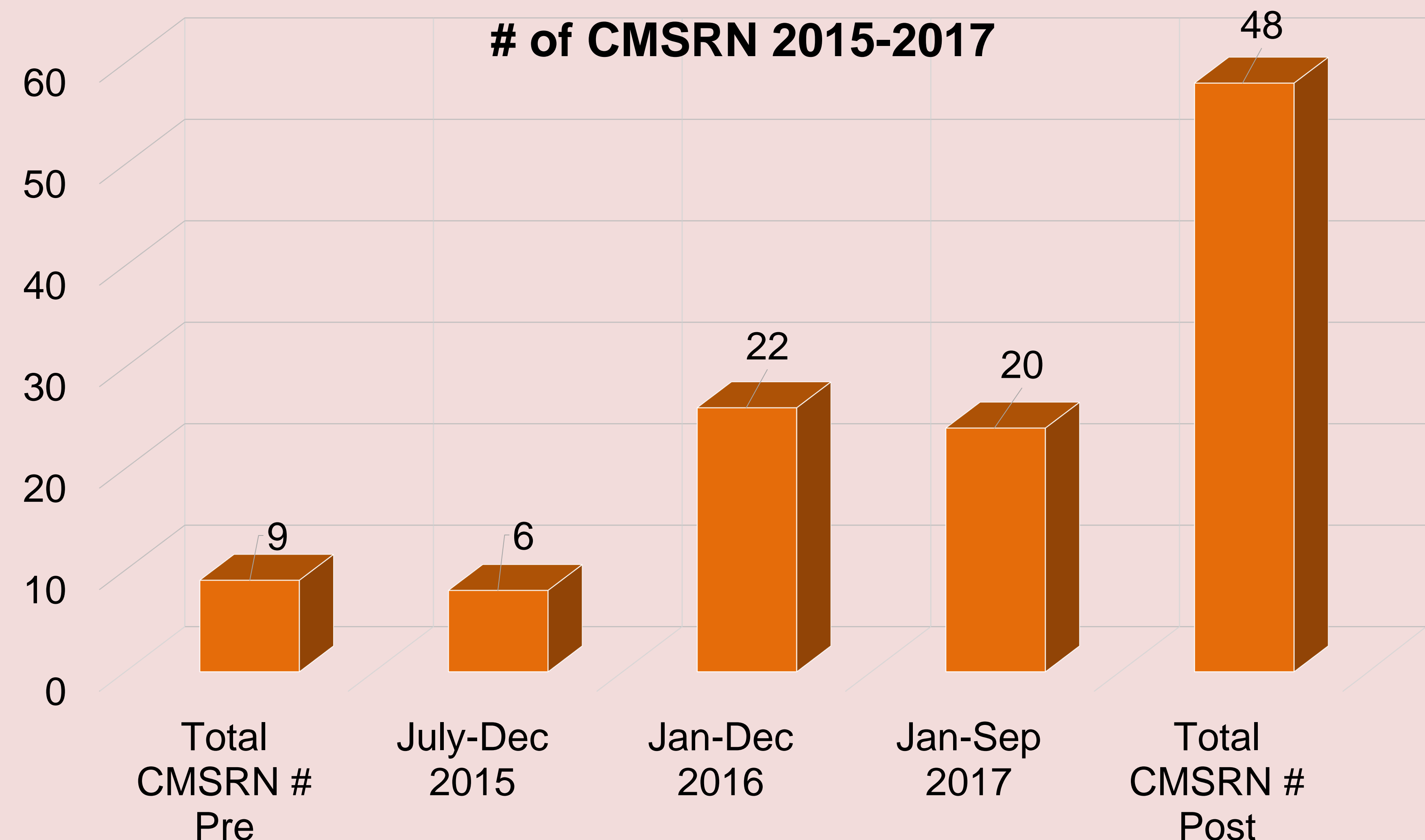
Results/Tables

Date	# RNs Scheduled to test	# RNs Passed test on 1st attempt	# of RNs Failed test on 1st attempt	# of RNs Passed test on 2nd attempt
Jul-Dec, 2015	7	6	1	0
Jan-Dec, 2016	24	20	4	2
Jan-Sep, 2017	23	19	4	1
Total	54	45	9	3

% Increase CMSRN 2015-2017



of CMSRN 2015-2017



Discussion

- Since July 2015 to August 2017, a total of 54 RNs have taken the Medical Surgical Certification Exam (CMSRN).
- Forty Three (48) RNs became CMSRNs. Nine (9) RNs failed the test on their first attempt with 3 RNs out of the 9 passing the test on the second attempt.
- In addition, there are 15 RNs who are currently in the process of studying and are registered for the exam.
- Prior to initiating this program, the total CMSRNs at South Miami Hospital accounted for only 9 nurses (6.9%).
- The CMSRN Failsafe Program allowed this hospital to increase its CMSRNs to a total of 48 which accounts to a 36.8% increase since this program was initiated.

Conclusion/Implications

- In summary, the CMSRN Failsafe program has opened the door for Medical Surgical RNs at our facility to obtain this certification without the fear of failing or paying any upfront fees.
- This has not only provided the RNs with a sense of personal accomplishment and satisfaction but it also allowed for our facility to exceed the NDNQI benchmark for specialty certification on the Medical Surgical units.
- Recognition from peers, other health care professionals, and leadership team have provided the impetus for the success of this endeavor.

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