Escape Room: A Competency Validation Approach

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Goal

The purpose of the evidence-based practice initiative is to enhance annual competencies of clinical staff in the medical/surgical areas through innovative validation methods.

Methods

• Clinical Nurse Educators (CNEs) identified need for change with clinical staff annual competencies.
• CNEs brainstormed new concepts for creating competencies.
• In collaboration with the Unit Based Practice Councils (UBPC), a learning needs assessment was conducted in each of the four units.
• Unit-based competencies were identified.
• The concept of an escape room activity was adapted and tailored to meet the needs of competency validation (Figure 1).
• A set up of different competency skill stations were designed separately for both Registered Nurses (RNs) and Clinical Partners (CPs).
• Groups of 6 to 8 staff participated and completed the activity within a one and a half hour time frame.
• A pre-test and post-test were conducted to measure knowledge before and after completion of the activity and an evaluation was completed by all staff.
• A scale evaluation was used from very dissatisfied to very satisfied and for the 180 submitted evaluations 100% answered very satisfied.

Outcomes

• A total number of 120 RNs and 45 CPs completed the activity.
• Total of 29 RN and 10 CP sessions were conducted over a period of 4 months.
• RNs completed twelve and CPs completed five competencies.
• The pre-test average scores measuring knowledge for the RNs were only 50% and post-test increased to 91%. The CPs pretest average scores were 42% and posttest increased to 92% (Figure 2).
• Staff evaluations determined a 100% satisfaction rate.

Discussion

• The innovative method for measuring competency of RNs and CPs in the medical-surgical areas was initiated by the exploration of non-traditional strategies for engaging the team through active learning.
• The nurse educators searched for modalities to demonstrate competency, improve nurse satisfaction, bridge the generational gaps of the staff, while saving cost associated with annual education.
• The escape room competency validation approach proved to be a successful method where staff demonstrated skill proficiency and teamwork in an entertaining setting.
• Staff felt glad to show competency in their role and reinforce current knowledge.

Implications for Practice

• Staff competency is essential to provide adequate care to patients.
• Validation of staff’s ability to perform skills within their role has traditionally been designed based on staff’s lack of proficiency in performing a designated skill.
• Clinical nurse educators need to find new learning strategies to engage clinical staff in active learning while increasing their level of competence.
• Overall, increased competency and satisfaction may positively reflect an improvement of clinical outcomes.

References

Available upon request

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