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The Implementation of a New Graduate RN Residency Program for Acute Care Hemodialysis Nurses

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Purpose Statement: This project measured the possibility of providing a new graduate RN with the appropriate residency experiences to become a competent, acute care hemodialysis nurse, with the ability to care for critically ill patients.

Relevance: Utilizing Benner's theory "Novice to Expert", the novice resident will progress to a competent Nephrology RN during this specialized program, which includes experiences on both a medicine and dialysis unit. This clinical project supports the establishment of a steady supply of strong new graduate RN's with aptitude to become competent medical nurses with proficiency in performing hemodialysis.

Methods: Establishment of a Nephrology Nurse Residency Program (NNRP) potentiated competent Dialysis RN's. A hybrid program was created to afford the residents the ability to complete rotations on both a medical floor and hemodialysis unit. New graduate RN's were recruited with the additional requirement of experience in healthcare. Three candidates were selected from diverse backgrounds. They participated in the hospital residency program, and the specialized hybrid program designed to enhance critical thinking and competency in all aspects of hemodialysis.

Outcome: This NNRP provided the opportunity for new graduate RN's to grow into advanced beginners on Benner's "Novice to Expert" spectrum. At present, each resident is an advanced beginner and able to perform treatments with minimal guidance. Each resident is striving towards becoming astute at performing dialysis and developing their critical thinking.

Conclusion: The implications for nursing practice revealed that as the renal patient population grows, Nephrology nursing will be prepared to provide high quality patient-centered care through evidenced-based practice; which these nurses gained through a comprehensive Nephrology RN Residency program. It is recommended that this program continue to be offered at healthcare institutions, which provide acute dialysis services.

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