

Title:

Nursing Leadership in Rural Settings: Challenges and Strategies

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Session Title:

Scientific Posters Session 2

Keywords:

Qualitative Research, Rural Nursing and Strategies

References:

Bish, M., Kenny, A., & Nay, R., (2012). A scoping review identifying contemporary issues in rural nursing leadership. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, 44(4). 411-417.

doi: 10.1111/j.1547-5069.2012.0147.x

Stroth, C. (2010). Job embeddedness as a nurse retention strategy for rural hospitals. *Journal of Nursing Administration*, 40(1), 32-35.

Abstract Summary:

Rural Chief Nursing Officers (CNO) encounter many challenges as a result of their proximity to other agencies. This qualitative study investigated strategies and opportunities to facilitate their growth and development. CNOs in rural Texas were interviewed to obtain their recommendations for developing expertise and mentors as they conduct health care.

Learning Activity:

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE
By the end of the presentation, the participants will be able to discuss strategies and recommendations for Chief Nursing Officers in rural settings to use for strengthening and supporting their growth as a leader.	I. Confirmation of the foundation related to what are the components for strategies and recommendations II. Overview of rural health nursing within acute care settings III. Strategies and recommendations learned from the qualitative study
By the end of the presentation, the participants will be able to list areas of concerns that must be careful considered as venues for supporting nurses in a rural setting to advance into mid-management positions.	I. Discussion related to the qualitative process used II. Challenges encountered within the process III. Discussion concerning support opportunities available for rural nurses in mid-management positions.

Abstract Text:

Purpose: Texas Team Rural Taskforce identified a challenge encountered by Chief Nursing Officers (CNO) functioning in rural hospitals and critical access hospitals related to networking and support. These CNOs, educated at the Associate or Baccalaureate degree levels, are responsible for managing the nursing staff along with staffing the units directly. On top of these challenges, these CNOs are being confronted with the Affordable Care directives and value-based funding challenges. In addition, the lack of a networking system is another challenge regularly identified. Having a network of like-minded individuals is viewed as a beneficial resource to support and mentor rural CNOs resulting in a positive impact concerning patient safety and management issues. Stroth (2010) acknowledged that "the complex issues of rural nursing practice places a high priority on retention of experienced, skilled staff nurses" (p. 33). Challenges undertaken by rural nurses include: reduced networking opportunities, challenges to advance professionally, static communities, lack of resources, lack of support, inadequate recruitment and retention activities, and varying skill mix (Bish et al, 2012; Stroth, 2010). The nursing leadership in these settings must also embrace an expanded role within the health care setting.

Methods: A qualitative project was conducted to identify strategies to be used to establish a mentor/support network for rural CNOs. West Texas rural hospital CNOs were interviewed to gather their recommendations for constructing a Rural CNO Network. A semi-structured set of questions was used for each conversation.

Results: The data from the interviews were compiled and analyzed to determine the recommendations and strategies for supporting and nurturing the CNOs in rural settings. The analysis was submitted to the participating CNOs to ensure that a complete representation of the strategies and recommendations identified were presented within the report.

Conclusion: This presentation will review the project process along with the results analyzed. Challenges and barriers encountered in the implementation of this project will be discussed to allow others to understand these aspects for planning future studies. Recommendations and strategies for use in rural settings for professional nurses assuming the leadership role as the Chief Nursing Officer will be provided. This presentation will address the application of the recommendations and strategies to global communities where collaborative support for nursing leaders is minimal. Nursing leaders in third world countries encounter challenges and barrier in networking with colleagues who can help them to grow as professionals. This presentation will apply the lessons learned during this data collection and analysis to these different challenging leadership settings.