

SOLUTION: Nursing/Clinical Team



PURPOSE

This team works to select and implement evidence-based nursing practices and high-performance work practices that support the organization's journey to excellence.

TEAM LEADER/FACILITATOR

The Nursing Team is chaired by a nursing leader; preferably a leader with a history of facilitating process/quality improvements. The Nursing Team chairperson serves as a member of the organization's Steering Team. It is advisable that the Nursing Team chairperson makes a multi-year commitment to serve as the chairperson as this consistency is helpful for team success. However, if a chairperson is not able to re-commit or is not effective in the role, the Steering Team should facilitate the replacement of the chairperson. A co-chairperson could be also utilized if the organization chooses.

TEAM MEMBERS

The remaining team membership is made up of nurses and nursing leaders of various levels; the majority of the membership is staff nurses. It is advisable to have each nursing unit represented by a member on this team. It is advisable to have representation from various shifts as well as lengths of seniority. Ask team members at the start of each year to recommit to the team and its responsibilities. If unable to recommit, the member should be replaced by the team. It is positive to have a level of stability/longevity on the Team as well as a level of membership change on the team over time.

We have some partners who do not solely have a nursing team, but rather put together a multi-disciplinary team of clinicians to elevate the patient experience. You may wonder why an organization would need this when they have the Patient Experience team to do so. Elevating the patient experience is a big job, and one that takes the work of EVERYONE in the organization. Nurses are uniquely positioned to affect the patient experience, and Nursing is most often the largest single work group in healthcare for any organization. Recruiting and retaining excellent nurses is vital to the health and welfare of a healthcare organization, and a team assigned to these tasks will move the organization forward in all strategies!



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Qualities of Team Members:

- Believes in, and supports, that these changes/improvements are necessary and important to the success of the organization.
- Willing and able to follow through on action assignments.
- Committed to role modeling the service/quality excellence and behavior standards that are expected of everyone in the organization.
- “High performers” who want to be part of a high performing team and organization.
- Able to work in a group.

TEAM NAME

The Team, as an early team action item, will likely want to rename the team (unless they prefer the name “Nursing Team”). We recommend that the Nursing Team chooses a name that speaks to the culture of Nursing the team will be improving over a period of years. Each team can choose a name that fits the Journey to excellence, or a name that speaks to Nursing and patient care alone.

TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES

- Keep up-to-date on current literature, evidence and High-Performance Work Practices related to nursing excellence (e.g., journal/research article reviews, etc.).
- Selects practices to implement related to creating excellence in nursing services.
- Coordinates with the other teams related to initiatives that impact non-nursing employees; For example, some of the positive communication standards (e.g., Narrated Care) may be best championed by the Nursing Team in place of the Patient Experience Team;
- Coordinates with the Steering Team as it relates to their activities;
- May need to establish further Teams, ad hoc groups or task forces to address specific initiatives (e.g., ER, Nursing Communication HCAHPS, HUSH/quiet campaign, etc.). We call these SUPER Teams, and they usually are created with multi-disciplinary action plans in mind. We have found that the super teams are put together to provide one function, or project, and they may disband at the end of the project or move to their next assignment.

The Nursing team’s main responsibilities will be to form a recommended Nursing Bundle specific to meet the needs of the organization and to drive patient care and improvements in patient care. (See the **Solution on Nursing Bundle of Best Practices** for additional resources). Likely, the patient care departments have a majority of the bundle in place already but packaging the separate solutions together as a bundle and developing a mantra of “*This is how we CARE around here*” is key. You



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will be asked to approach the bundle your team develops as the BEST way for improvements in the nursing and patient experience to happen. The Nursing Team is very research driven.

Some Nursing Team's derive from a team that may already be in existence. Those duties the prior team was assigned may also be assigned to this newly formed team. For instance, some of our Nursing Teams have policy reviews each month, or fundraisers for nursing scholarships. As long as the Nursing Bundle of Best Practices is alive and well, and Nursing overall has great pride in the work they do- we are supportive of the team adopting more GREAT work practices in their journey plan. The focus should be on improving the patient experience, improving the nursing experience, and improving workflow and work processes for nurses and other disciplines who care for patients.

- The Nursing Team will be asked to be very data driven. What is the voice of the patient saying on surveys? How can a team of both inpatient and outpatient nurses respond to this? It is best to have at least one person on the team that can provide training on the assessing of patient satisfaction and quality data.
- The Nursing Team's data may, in fact, be related to the overall satisfaction in Nursing. As CNO's Sue and I subscribed to ANA's recommendation for Nurse Specific indicators, and surveyed nurses only (usually during Nurses week!). There is a cost to this, but the NDNQI survey provides invaluable insight into how the work environment in nursing truly affects patient care. If you, as a team, do decide to do a nurse-specific survey to base your action plan items on the data, (see the Employee Experience Team **Solution on Surveying & Improving the Employee Experience** for examples on how to create "good" from survey results).



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