Adding an Admission Nurse to Help Alleviate Staff’s Workload Stress

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Background  
Unexpected patient admissions and clinical problems  
- Increase nurse workload (Van Bogaert et al. 2017)  
- Delay admissions  
- Delay treatments  
- Increase costs for patients  
(Lane et al. 2009)

Having many admissions during shift change creates challenged/stressed nurses who feel they cannot give adequate care

Admission Nurses  
- Reduce admission delays, treatment delays, and associated costs (Lane et al. 2009)  
- Quality time spent with the newly admitted patients (Sisoff et al. 2009)  
- Increase time for nurses to provide direct patient care, which improves patient and nurse satisfaction (Spiva & Johnson, 2012)

Purpose  
For nurses anticipating admissions, we aimed to:  
- Reduce workload stress  
- Increase time to provide quality care to admitted patients  
- Increase confidence in delivering care to other assigned patients when a new admission arrives

Location  
- Large, urban, quaternary hospital  
- 34-bed Medical-Surgical unit  
- Nurses work 12-hour shifts

Approach
1. Survey about admissions and workload created (Figure 1)  
2. Nurses surveyed October 2019  
3. Results to unit manager – decision to create admission nurse position  
4. Role announced, unit nurses interviewed  
5. Admission RN started November 2019

Hours: 11:00 to 23:00  
Days: four days/week.

6. Nurses re-surveyed March 2020

Results
Adding an admissions nurse helped significantly (p < 0.05) improve nurses’ feeling:
- They have less workload when they get an admission (Question 3) and
- The unit is doing something to alleviate their workload related to admissions (Question 5).

More nurses rated their stress level lower after the admission RN started.

Fewer nurses reported having a hard time getting tasks done when they have an admission.

Teammate Comments and Stories
“From experience, I know how overwhelming it can be to get an admission while working with other high acuity patients so it’s nice to take that stress from another nurse”  
- Keeley Hernandez, BSN RN-BC (3W Admission RN)

When she (admission RN) is here it is a 0 to 1 rating (stress level, 0 is least and 5 is worst)  
- comment from the post-survey

Figure 1 Survey questions asked about nurses’ feelings related to admissions

Figure 2 Mean Likert scores (with standard error bars) describe nurses’ feelings related to admissions and discharges both before and after an admissions nurse is added to the unit.  
Significant differences between the means were tested using two-tailed Student’s t-tests assuming homoscedasticity (even variability) and significance assumed if p < 0.05 (n = 24).

Conclusions
Having an admission RN decreases bedside work load and stress level.

Challenges doing the pre and post survey  
- Not knowing if the same RNs did the pre and post survey.  
- Some RNs who did the pre-survey are no longer working on 3W.

Implications for Practice  
- When unit RNs had to do an admission, they were not familiar with all the admission tasks due to not doing it as often.  
- Admission RN only present during weekdays.  
- Possible burn out of the admission RN with back-to-back admissions.  
- Having a second admission RN would help in avoiding possible burn out on the admission RN.

References


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