Escaping the Traditional Classroom:
The Use of an Escape Room in a New Graduate Nurse Residency Program

Veronica Bigott, MSN, ACNS, RN-BC; Robin Hackett, MSN, RN-BC; Elaine Doyle, MSN, RN-BC, CRRN; Susan Storto, MBA, BSN, RN-BC

Advocate Aurora Health Care

Background

Aligned with the Institute of Medicine (IOM), a standardized Nurse Residency Program was implemented across a network of 13 acute care hospitals in 2016. All new graduate nurses were enrolled in the New Graduate Nurse Residency Program.

Session and program evaluations indicated new graduate nurses wished for more hands-on approach of relevant clinical topics.

An escape room was developed as a 60-minute component of a multi-station skills day.

Approach

Purpose

Using an interactive team-based approach, nurses gain an understanding of how policies and procedures are a resource to be utilized on the unit to guide practice.

Over 98% of the participants strongly agreed/agreed the escape room concept encouraged collaboration as a team and strengthened understanding of policies and procedures through practical applications.

Findings

Testimonials

"I absolutely loved the escape room especially to build our critical thinking."

"I loved the escape room! Very different and engaging fun."

"We were able to learn in a new way and put our minds together to solve each puzzle."

"Great way to work as a team and think outside the box."

Recommendations

Content development utilizes best practices, policies & procedures and enhances analytical problem solving.

Encourages team work and socialization among new graduate nurses.

Interactive concept aligns with adult learning principals.

Fiscally conservative concept that could be replicated for various topics.

Potential limitations include scalability to large groups and monitoring policies and procedures to ensure updated content is reflected in each mini station.

Implications for Practice

By creating an interactive learning environment new graduate nurses become engaged learners which enhances knowledge retention and application. The creative approach can assist in content delivery in an alternative, non-traditional classroom format.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Colleen Leake and Stephanie Zidek, Directors of Nursing Education and Professional Development and Edward Kim, Data Analyst, Nursing Education and Professional Development.

References

Available upon request.