

COACHING FOR CLINICAL NURSE LEADERS: A MIXED METHODS STUDY.

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ABSTRACT

Introduction/Background

Research has confirmed that leadership is a key element in creating healthy work environments, promoting optimum levels of safety and in the delivery of high-quality patient care. Contemporary nursing requires strong leaders and positive role models who will provide leadership, motivation, support and encouragement for their teams to deliver quality outcomes. However, research paints a less than optimal work context for clinical nurse leaders, detailing a lack of support and professional development for both novice and experienced leaders. Despite the crucial role clinical nurse leaders play in the healthcare system, there has been very little attention paid to how these leaders are supported and developed within their roles.

Aim/Purpose of the project

This study examined coaching as an approach for supporting and developing clinical nurse leaders within their roles.

Methods/Process/Who is being studied

An explanatory mixed methods design was used and consisted of a quantitative phase at the outset, followed by a qualitative phase. An eight-week coaching program was designed as an intervention for the quantitative phase with pre and post testing. The qualitative phase consisted of interviews of leaders who participated in the coaching. 60 clinical nurse leaders participated in the study.

Results/Outcome

Results from both phases of the study show that coaching can be a beneficial approach for developing clinical nurse leaders. Quantitative data showed that engagement increased but burnout was also high. All were highly satisfied with the coaching and attained their professional goals. Three main themes emerged from the qualitative data; Professional Enrichment, Personal and Professional Growth and the Ripple Effect.

Recommendations/Conclusion

The findings are encouraging. Coaching can potentially add value to the profession by providing a tailored, individual approach to professional development, that is suitable for meeting the learning needs of both novice and experienced leaders.

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