

EMPOWERING PROFESSIONALS AT THE POINT OF CARE: THE ROLE OF THE CLINICAL COACH IN PATIENT SAFETY

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ABSTRACT

Introduction/Background

The safety and quality of care for patients in hospitals is a global concern and an ongoing focus for organisations within Australia. The Clinical Coach Framework (CCF) is an innovative point of care education model, which was implemented to support the maintenance of high standards of care and prevent patient harm. The CCF utilises highly experienced nurses and midwives in the role of Clinical Coach, to empower and engage staff as they learn and develop practice wisdom at the point of care.

Aim/Purpose of the project

In this research aimed to understand how the clinical coach role supported safe practice at the point of care. We wanted to understand clinical coach activities and where they intervened “just in time” or prior, to prevent an error or incident occurring at the point of care.

Methods/Process/Who is being studied

A multi-methods research design was utilised. Both quantitative and qualitative data were obtained in this project. Only the quantitative data will be presented.

Results/Outcome

Results showed that all clinical coaches had intervened “just in time” or prior to prevent errors, incidents or omissions occurring at the point of care. They intervened with a variety of disciplines including nurses, doctors and allied health staff. Factors influencing their interventions included skill mix, patient acuity, staff commencements or rotations. The most common reasons for interventions were related to medication errors(75%), clinical procedures(72%), documentation(68%), assessment skills(65%), and clinical handover(58%). 48% reported an adverse reaction from senior staff when they intervened to prevent an error occurring.

Recommendations/Conclusion

This study provides important insights into the role that clinical coaches can play in supporting safe practice at the point of care. Particularly, Clinical Coaches are a key resource for novices and are crucial during times of orientation and induction, providing a safety net across the organisation.