Advancing Nursing Excellence

A sound nursing strategy is a necessary component of efforts to be patient-centric and to achieve organizational goals for patient experience. Nursing communication and leadership skills, teamwork, and the adoption of evidence-based practices in nursing shape the framework necessary for transforming performance.

Additionally, nursing is the greatest component of labor in most health care organizations. It is the largest budgetary line item and is at the bedside more consistently than any other care team member.

Leverage nursing-sensitive data using a database with international benchmarking—such as the National Database of Nursing Quality Indicators® (NDNQI®)—to evaluate operational and clinical performance in nursing at unit and facility levels.

A nursing Professional Practice Model (PPM) rooted in a Shared Governance Model is a powerful tool for clinical and operational excellence. Shared Governance is defined as total leader-associate collaboration. It is not a series of meetings. Shared Governance is a mindset that removes the power gradient and promotes open discussion and collaboration between leaders and staff. It involves empowering nurses to participate in organizational decision making about clinical practice standards, quality improvement, staffing, and professional development. Integrating a shared governance standard into the PPM gives nurses across service lines and care settings a voice in—and accountability for—nursing practice and patient care.

Survey nurses about their work environment and job satisfaction, and monitor their level of engagement.

- **VIDEO**: Finding Meaning in Nursing ▶

- Evaluate nurses' perceptions of their work environment and job satisfaction levels using the National Database of Nursing Quality Indicators® (NDNQI®) Practice Environment Scale (PES) and Job Satisfaction Scales-revised (JSS-R) nursing surveys.

- Assess nurses' perceptions of organizational value for nursing, and their level of involvement with decision-making, process development, and improvement with an employee engagement survey.

- Use collaborative meetings and leader rounds on staff to obtain insight into caregivers' perceptions of their work environment.

- Make informed improvements to the nursing strategy with a comprehensive assessment of nursing metrics including nurses' job satisfaction, engagement, and perceptions of the safety environment.

  - Consider nursing vacancy and turnover rates. If experiencing high vacancy or turnover rates, your organization and management may not be creating a satisfying and attractive work environment.

  - Measure, monitor, and mitigate burnout and build resilience.

- **VIDEO**: Building Nurse Resilience ▶

- Assess the nursing practice environment, and monitor nursing-sensitive quality outcomes using valid measures from a national or international database that offers comparative data—such as the National Database of Nursing Quality Indicators® (NDNQI®).

- Empower top-of-scope practice in nurses.
  - Considering mentoring and developing career ladders to better engage the nursing staff in owning quality and outcomes.
  - Prepare all nurses to be leaders, mentors, and educators.

- **VIDEO**: Develop Your Nurse Managers ▶

- Understand your nursing structure for staffing, skill mix, education, and specialty certification as compared to peers and as compared to top performers in nurse sensitive metrics. High use of agency or floating nurses can be detrimental to patient experiences.

- Assess clinical quality and patient perceptions of care.

- Assess clinical core measure performance to target areas that would benefit from improvement efforts.

- Routinely administer patient experience surveys and take advantage of opportunities to add custom questions to address priority improvement initiatives.

- Use pulse surveys and point of care surveys to integrate real-time data for faster and more targeted improvement efforts.

Identify the common causes of underperforming clinical metrics.

- Use all of the above data to identify work units and cultural elements for targeted improvement.

- Employ quality professionals trained in cause analysis to analyze data across all domains to identify the common causes of poor performance.