

SE5 – COMMITMENT TO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provide a narrative description of a unit's or division's action plan for registered nurses' progress toward obtaining professional board certification. The narrative must include the following:

- *State the targeted goal*
- *How the target was established*
- *What strategies were utilized to achieve or maintain target*
- *How the nurses are supported to achieve or maintain professional board certification*

The NewYork-Presbyterian (NYP) Department of Nursing vision statement is to be the world leader in nursing. To achieve this goal, NYP developed strategic initiatives that focus on the professional growth and development of registered nurses (RNs) throughout NYP, including NewYork-Presbyterian/Columbia University Irving Medical Center (NYP/Columbia). Paramount among these initiatives are strategies to ensure RNs progress toward obtaining professional certification.

Establishing the Target Goal

In January 2022, Adlai Donaldson, MBA, BSN, RN-BC, Patient Care Director (nurse manager, at the time), Psychiatric (9GN-605501) [9GN] Unit, met with 9GN Unit Council chairs and co-chairs (at the time) Anthony Wick, MSN, RN, PMH-BC, clinical nurse, 9GN; Anaudy Figuereo, MSN, RN, PMH-BC, clinical nurse, 9GN; and Samantha Jardine, BSN, RN, clinical nurse, 9GN; to establish a certification goal to increase the professional nursing board certification rate. They noted the 2021 professional nursing board certification rate for 9GN was 40 percent. They considered this as their baseline and set a two-year target goal to increase the professional nursing board certification rate by one percentage point to 41 percent over two years. This target aligned with NYP/Columbia's organization-wide goal set by Bernadette Khan, DNP, RN, NEA-BC, Group Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer, NYP/Columbia Division, and the Nurse Executive Council, which included patient care directors and directors of nursing.

Mr. Wick, Ms. Figuereo, and Ms. Jardine met with the 9GN Unit Council to develop an action plan to increase nurse professional certifications that consisted of the following main strategies:

- Designing a certification path
- Utilization of institutional resources
- Facilitating study groups and mentorship
- Celebrating achievements
- Sustaining meaningful dialogue

Strategies Utilized

Designing a Certification Path

Mr. Donaldson initiated professional development discussions as soon as a newly hired nurse would arrive on the unit. In Mr. Donaldson's initial meetings with new nurses, the focus was on identifying their short- and long-term goals and passion for nursing, creating a professional development plan, and establishing a pathway towards achieving the Psychiatric and Mental Health (PMH-BC) nursing certification. As the first-year evaluation approached, the professional goal for many nurses was certification, leading the conversations toward preparation strategies, available resources, review courses, and successful exam-taking strategies.

Utilization of Institutional Resources

Increasing awareness of available certification resources was crucial for the 9GN Unit Council. Mr. Wick, Ms. Figuereo, and Ms. Jardine regularly disseminated information about certification, including links to review courses offered by the NYP Nursing Professional Development department.

Facilitating Study Groups and Mentorship

The 9GN Unit Council recognized the effectiveness of peer-to-peer discussions. Mr. Wick, Ms. Figuereo, and Ms. Jardine encouraged certified nurses to play a pivotal role as mentors who encourage and influence the certification preparation process. Nurses preparing for the exam were encouraged to form study groups with certified nurses who could offer guidance and resources.

Celebrating Achievements

All certified nurses are recognized at the annual Certification Day celebration. Clinical nurses who obtained new certification were also publicly congratulated and highlighted in huddles, unit emails, staff meetings, and unit retreats. Additionally, Mr. Donaldson

submitted names of newly certified 9GN clinical nurses to *CNO Connect*, NYP/Columbia's newsletter, in recognition of this accomplishment.

Sustaining Meaningful Dialogue

To maintain awareness of certification, reminders, updates, and conversations were integrated into the unit council meetings as a regular agenda item. These meetings provided a platform for nurses with various certifications to share their experiences, emphasizing the importance of certification in shaping their nursing practice. The overarching goal was to align with American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) certification standards, promoting patient health and safety through the comprehensive credentialing of psychiatric and mental health nurses. This continuous dialogue reinforced the unit council's commitment to advancing nursing practice in line with standards of excellence.

Support to Achieve and Maintain Target

The unit council regularly disseminated support offered by NYP/Columbia to achieve and maintain certification, which included the following:

1. Certification examination reimbursement: Nurses who passed an approved professional certification exam were reimbursed the cost of the exam. Full-time nurses were reimbursed for one exam fee per year and part-time nurses who pass were eligible for a prorated portion.
2. Certification pay differential: Nurses who hold an American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) approved certification in the area of their specialty received \$2,300 annually as a pay differential. If an employee moved from one specialty field/area to another, they continued to receive their differential until that certification expired. Part-time employees received a prorated differential.
3. Certification review courses: The NYP Nursing Professional Development department offered a variety of certification review courses for nurse pertinent to practice specialties at NYP/Columbia.