

Implementation of a Dedicated Education Unit (DEU)

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INTRODUCTION

Topic: Improvement in nurse staffing, patient experience, and employee engagement scores in a Progressive Care Unit (PCU) at TriStar Summit Medical Center with the implementation of a Dedicated Education Unit (DEU).

Problem Statement: Current situation is a critical nurse staffing shortage leading to high vacancy rate, decreased patient experience scores, and low employee engagement. (undesirable event) on the PCU unit at TriStar Summit Medical Center.

Team Members:

- CNO: Executive Sponsor
- Dean of Nursing: Co-Sponsor
- Clinical Instructor: TriStar Summit Nurses
- Clinical Faculty: Cumberland University Faculty

Aim

The hospital's area of focus that will be addressed with the project is nurse staffing shortage, increasing the patient experience, and increasing employee engagement scores through the use of a Dedicated Education Unit (DEU). This will align with [Aim #3: Health Care Must Be Patient-Centered](#) from the Institute of Medicine's 6 dimensions of quality. The DEU will be patient centered by training nurses on a dedicated unit to provide more support to nursing students in their clinical rotation. By doing this, the nursing team will be patient centered and have more focus on the care of the patient versus traditional nursing clinicals. In return, these nurses will feel more confident at the completion of their nursing program and want to pursue working on the same unit they trained under with the DEU. Additionally, the patient experience will improve, and TriStar Summit employee engagement will improve as the staff will have more support and will be more engaged into their unit. The stated objectives include:

1. Improvement of nurse vacancy rate from 65% RN vacancy rate to <40% RN vacancy rate by 2023.
2. Improvement in patient experience scores from 33.33% Top Box score to >70% by April 1, 2022.
3. Improvement in employee engagement score from 48% in October 2021 to a score of >70% for May 2022 Vital Voices Survey.

METHODS

The method used for this project was the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA).

Plan: A partnership with Cumberland University and TriStar Summit Medical Center for a Dedicated Education Unit (DEU) will better support nursing students with a better clinical experience, our patients with a better hospital experience, and ultimately improve the nurse staffing shortage on the hospital's PCU unit as those students who are part of the DEU will want to pursue employment upon graduation from the nursing program. Employee moral will also increase as evidenced by employee engagement scores with the use of additional help with the students and engagement into the facility.

Do: Implementing the DEU program requires education and pre work to occur and communication is key to success. If the communication of this program is missed or all the key stakeholders do not have a clear understanding, the program is at risk for being less successful. Unexpected observations might be related to staffing, if the trained staff are pulled to other units or if they call in sick, how will float pool staff have the same training to support the students in a DEU?

Study: The data will be analyzed throughout the implementation and also post implementation in regards to RN vacancy rate, patient experience top box score, and employee engagement scores as evidence by the Vital Voices survey data.

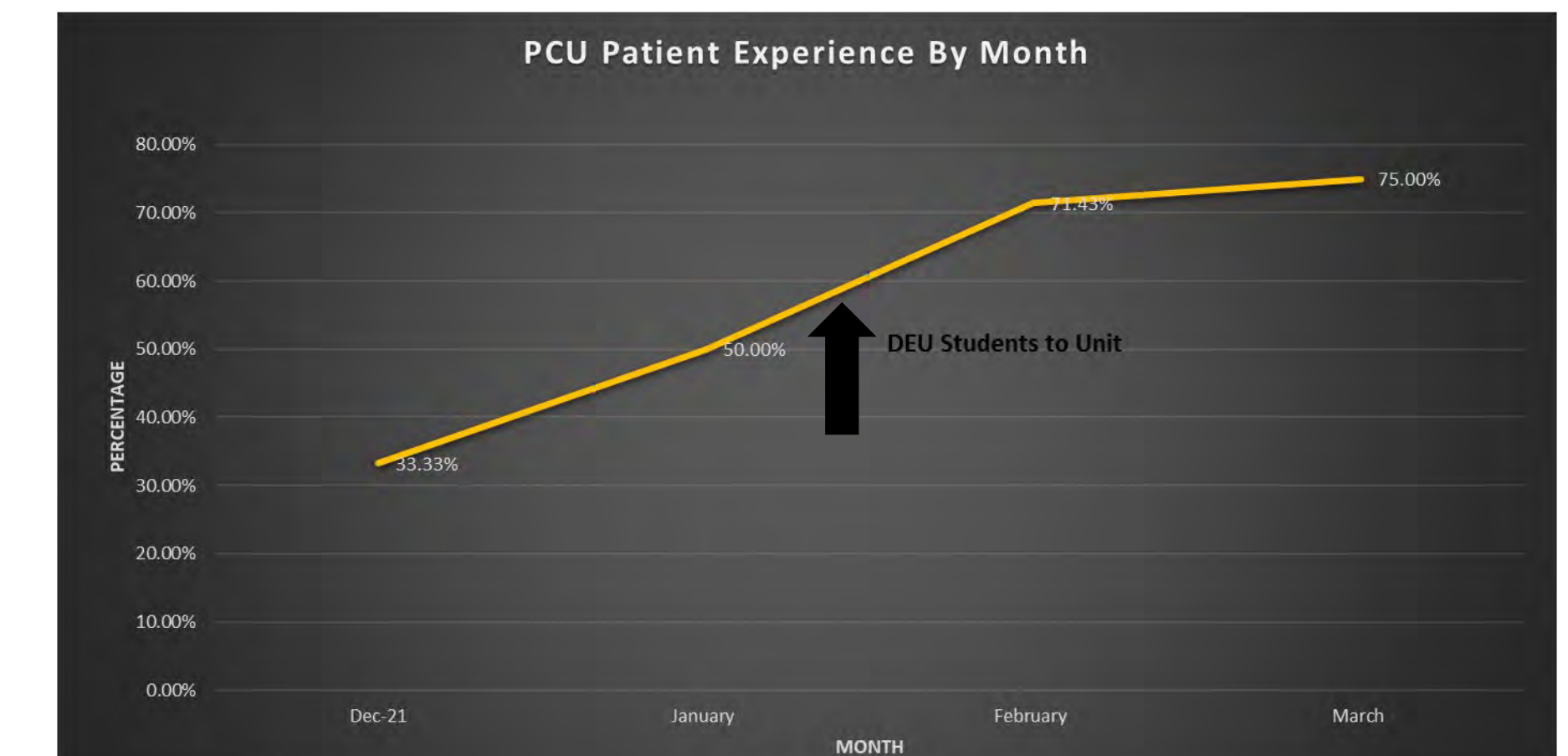
Act: If the test shows the desired improvement, the next steps will be to adopt the DEU to include a second unit for the upcoming Fall 2022 semester. If the test shows limited improvements, we will continue to stay on one unit and make the necessary improvements over another semester before expanding the DEU program. The plan for next steps includes completing a survey with the Cumberland University nursing students to learn about their experience and also measure the defined goals for improvement.

RESULTS

After the DEU implementation and completion of the semester, the results were favorable by the following metrics:

- Patient Experience increased to 75% TopBox Score from 33.33% as measured by Press Ganey Data.
- Employee Engagement scores increased to 82% favorable overall engagement, increase from 48% in October 2021.
- RN Vacancy rate has remained flat; however three students from the DEU have joined TriStar Summit as Patient Care Tech's (PCT's) with the intent to join as RN upon graduation in December 2022.

RESULTS



Pulse Overview



IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Implications for practice with the implementation of a successful DEU include improving patient experience and an improving colleague experience. This project supported both the nursing staff with engagement, growth, and development and also the nursing students with a better clinical experience with better connection and engagement with their clinical instructors throughout the semester. As a result of this project, the DEU has been adopted and will be expanded to an additional unit for the Fall 2022 semester.

REFERENCES

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