

Project Title

Pre-Professional-Training Nursing Mentorship Programme

Project Lead and Members

Project lead: Rozana Bte Arshad (Leader, TTSH Nursing Recruitment and Operations Business Strategy Team)

Project members: George Glass (Developer, Experiential Learning Programme)

Organisation(s) Involved

- Tan Tock Seng Hospital Nursing Recruitment and Operations Business Strategy Team (ROBUST)
- Tan Tock Seng Hospital Pre-Professional Education Office
- Tan Tock Seng Hospital Medical Education Office
- Tan Tock Seng Hospital Human Resources

Project Period

Start date: June - 2017

Completed date: Ongoing with runs of Healthcare Assistant Trainee Programme (Paused currently due to COVID-19 situation)

Aims

To develop a pre-professional training mentorship programme to aid participants' transition into nursing practice

Background

Mentorship has been shown to greatly aid in the transition of student healthcare professionals, in particular nurses, into their professional practice. However, many nursing students report difficulty with the initial transition into nursing school, adjusting to the balance of academic teaching and clinical training. In addition, a common refrain we found during initial ground-sensing with sponsored

nursing students was that students were at risk of entering training with an inaccurate or incomplete understanding of the profession due to limited prior exposure to the nursing profession before they started their studies. Such individuals identified with facing more struggles during their initial year of entry as they would have to quickly adapt to better understand the rationale of nursing. Hence, we sought to examine if a stronger or more accurate understanding of nursing would improve their entry and training into nurses.

Methods

The principles around the mentorship programme were developed around the ONE Healthcare Leadership Framework, released by MOHH in 2016. This was the framework created to identify the values, personal qualities and behaviours required for effective leadership performance in healthcare. Hence, emphasis was made in ensuring that throughout the programme, the mentors would aim to develop and strengthen the following personal qualities – Learning ability, Resilience and Emotional Intelligence – and build the following values within them – Compassion, Humility, Integrity and Public Service Purpose.

Mentorship was provided as part of the participants' Clinical Internship Programme (Now rebranded as the Healthcare Assistant Trainee Programme). Individuals keen on exploring nursing as a career were invited to intern within an acute care area for a minimum of 2 weeks, buddied alongside a registered nurse in to better understand the nature of care delivered as nurses. In addition, they were trained in the conduct of basic care activities to better prepare them for their expected clinical capabilities in their first year of nursing student training.

Mentorship episodes were shaped around the "Pulse Check" system we developed, to allow for opportunities for feedback and reflection. The contents of the Pulse Check are as follows:

1. Allowing the mentee to "decompress", highlighting the top 3 things they have learnt over the past week of their internship.

2. Clarification of questions they might have had from observations of care delivered or interactions between the nurses in the wards.
3. Understanding the rationale for actions done by the nurses and other clinicians, allowing them to understand the clinical and evidence underpinning the practice around them.
4. Understand the meaning behind the activities done by the nurses.
5. Reminding the interns that their efforts are appreciated by nurses. We conducted “Pulse Checks” weekly, gathering all interns in the hospital together to allow them to share their experiences and to learn with each other. Within a month, several interns were identified as “ringleaders” to help guide and lead junior interns as well, helping to establish a culture of co-mentorship and co-learning as well.

Results

Since its introduction in June 2017, 26 participants have received mentorship as part of their clinical internship. 12 of them requested to extend their internship to continue receiving mentorship and guidance while further developing their clinical skills, choosing to remain with the programme for up to 3 months and taking up leadership roles in the coaching and co-mentoring of junior mentors.

All participants have since commenced or are awaiting training as healthcare professionals, with 24 of them opting to enter the nursing profession.

Qualitative feedback has been positive to date. The following themes were identified after debriefs with the participants:

1. Increased confidence in delivering direct care after understanding its role.
2. Removal of initial fear of wounds after understanding nature of wounds and need for regular dressings and treatment.
3. Removal of initial fear of engaging with a patient with dementia after learning from ward nurses the nature of dementia and how individuals are still able to

engage and collaborate in care delivery with them, helping nurses and clinicians in dialect translation and delivery of delirium prevention strategies.

4. Gaining a sense of identity as a member of the “nursing family”
5. Ease in transition in gaining skills in school, relating to clinical excellence. In addition, several participants went on to take leadership and mentorship roles in their nursing training, actively mentoring and tutoring their peers and junior students.

Lessons Learnt

A major constraint that we overcame was the initial reluctance of mentors to provide tutelage as it was “what we never received when we were students”. Hence, a key mindset change was first needed in the mentors themselves, that this would be an approach that would benefit the next generation of nurses. Over time, multiple mentors became more enthusiastic and keener to support the programme as they witnessed first-hand the benefits the mentorship had on their participants, with more wards and areas requesting to join in the programme as well.

Conclusion

Mentorship is a critical skill which greatly aids in the development of future healthcare professionals. Through this, interns could gain the skills and confidence to aid in their transition into nursing school.

Additional Information

The Pulse Check approach has been expanded to cover nursing students sponsored or on scholarships with TTSH, helping to prepare them for their journey into becoming part of the TTSH family as well. Its modularity shows the framework’s potential as a basis for any mentorship relationship, both within and without clinical areas.

Project Category

New Pedagogy

Keywords

Healthcare Training & Education, New Pedagogy, Mentorship, Pre-Professional Training, Leadership Development, Nursing, Tan Tock Seng Hospital, Pulse Check System, Clinical Internship

Name and Email of Project Contact Person(s)

Name: Rozana Bte Arshad, George Glass

Email: Rozana_Arshad@ttsh.com.sg; glass_george_frederick@ttsh.com.sg

Project Attachment





