

A Case Study for Pediatric Educators

CARING FOR PEDIATRIC PATIENTS IN ADULT HOSPITAL UNITS

Nurses in adult unit increase competencies and critical care knowledge for pediatric patients.

Challenge

The complex issue of caring for children and adults in the same critical care unit creates an educational challenge as organizations work to meet the needs of both populations. UC Davis Children's Hospital faced this issue in 2018 when a surge of pediatric patients sought care at their hospital. This made it necessary to transfer pediatric patients to the Adult Medical Intensive Care Unit.

"Our adult care nurses were very concerned. They were fearful of causing harm and they did not feel like they had the background to take care of these patients. We also saw a strain in the relationships with the patients' families," says Michelle Linenberger, pediatric professional development specialist and leader of the initiative to fill this education gap.

Details

The hospital conducted a needs assessment, which included focus groups and a survey. This identified a practice gap in knowledge and skills among the adult critical care nurses caring for the pediatric critical care population. In response, the hospital created the Pediatric Education Foundation, which included the implementation of a Pediatric Learning Solutions (PLS) course bundle focusing on critical care.

"The pediatric specific training helped the nurses understand the patients developmentally," says Linenberger. "They were finally able to understand why their patients were acting the way they were. The families see the difference in nurses' confidence and competence making relationships phenomenal now."

Create learning success

- Established a blended learning model of education
- Assigned a bundle of PLS courses to each area of the adult hospital caring for pediatric patients
- Courses provided foundational information before staff met for in-person simulation education and case study experiences

Results

- Increase from novice to competent in the nurses' ability to care for pediatric patients and their families
- 94% of nurses in the adult ICU completed the Pediatric Education Foundation training
- Learners verbalized and demonstrated an increase in competence during pediatric critical care simulation, case study participation and on the Adult ICU floor
- Pediatric professional development specialist had more time to round in adult areas caring for pediatric patients
- 98% of learners reported increased pediatric critical care knowledge base

LOOKING AHEAD

After the success of the initial program, the hospital plans to:

- Align PLS courses with the core competence identified for their children's hospital
- Measure patient outcomes
- Evaluate patient satisfaction and staff engagement

VERIFICATION

- UC Davis also took advantage of the PLS Trauma Courses to meet the educational requirement set by the American College of Surgeons for their Level 1 Trauma verification.

CONTACT

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