Painting a landscape of acute care nurse scientist work

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March 1, 2024
Background and Problem Statement

Hospitals are increasingly hiring nurse scientists, motivated in part by nursing excellence designations such as Magnet. Magnet® designation requires at least three, nurse-led, Institutional Review Board-approved research studies to be conducted in the hospital every four years and additional evidence-based practice (EBP). However, clinical nurses often lack the specialized knowledge and training necessary to engage in well-designed research or EBP. Mentorship is needed to foster clinical nurse participation in research and EBP.

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Nurse Scientist as Research and EBP Mentor

**Researcher**
- Uses the scientific method to ask and answer clinical questions
- Collects, analyzes, and interprets data to inform best patient care outcomes

**Consultant**
- Guides clinicians on applying the scientific method to ask and answer clinical questions
- Recommends use of valid metrics to link interventions to outcomes

**Advocate**
- Advocates for resources to implement, evaluate, and disseminate research findings
- Supports grant writing activities and leadership approval to fund research activities

**Leader**
- Creates strategic plans for research planning across the organization
- Links research work to the strategic plan of the organization
Clinical Question and Project Aims

- Clinical question: Among hospitals committed to Magnet® designation who hire nurse scientists to support nursing research and EBP, what are day-to-day operations and how much time is spent on specialized work?

- Purpose:
  - To describe an innovative strategy to quantify acute care nurse scientist research and EBP consultations.
Methods

Research and EBP Consultation Tracking Form was created using Research and Data Capture (REDCAP).

Each day, the nurse scientist would enter unique consultations characterizing:

One nurse scientist used the tracking form from April 10, 2023, to September 29, 2023.

Data entries were reviewed descriptively.
# Tracking Sheet

**Please enter the date for the consultative hours you are reporting?**

* must provide value

**Please enter type of project for which you are reporting hours?**

* must provide value

**Are you the project lead for this work?**

- Yes
- No

**What is the title of the project you are reporting hours for?**

* must provide value

**Is this a multi-site project?**

- Yes
- No

**Is this project being conducted in collaboration with faculty from a university?**

- Yes
- No

**Please list the type of support you provided during this consult? Check all that apply.**

* must provide value

- Articulation of clinical question (PICO)
- Literature review and evidence synthesis
- Distinguishing between research versus non-research intent
- Development or review of project proposal
- Data analysis
- Summarizing/presenting results to major stakeholders for non-peer reviewed
- Writing an abstract for a peer-reviewed conference
- Preparing/presenting podium or poster presentation for peer-reviewed conference
- Writing a manuscript for peer-reviewed publication
- Grant writing support
- Explaining the Providence clinical inquiry process
- Data collection/recruitment
- Observing presentations (defenses, conference presentation etc.)
- IRB processing
- Connecting project lead other resources
- Student related documents processing

**How much time, in hours, did you spend on this work for the specified date?**

* must provide value

[Submit]
Findings

Number of unique projects supported by nurse scientist across the Central Division: 2023

- All Central Division (CD): 8 Research Projects, 4 EBP/QI Projects
- Multi-site within CD: 13 Research Projects, 13 EBP/QI Projects
- Single Site: 9 Research Projects, 25 EBP/QI Projects

Number of Minutes per Consult, Research versus EBP

- Research: 75.76 minutes
- EBP: 52.26 minutes
Findings

Number of Entered Records by Project Type

EBP/QI Records
Research Records

Proproportion of Time on Specialized Tasks

31.80%
19.50%
17.70%
14.70%
14.70%

Proposal Development
Writing Manuscripts
Assisting with Organization's IRB Process
Conducting Data Analysis
Presenting Results to Internal Stakeholders
Findings: Subjective Feedback

The tracking form was straightforward and easy to use, like documenting my work at end of shift as a frontline nurse.

Some of the categories for consultations types overlapped, and I found myself inconsistently recording exactly what kind of support I provided in a given consult. I also would often provide many kinds of support in a single consult which made it difficult to nicely categorize how time was spent.

Time restraints in my role created frequent “back-charting” habit, which may have contributed to either under- or over-estimations of how time was spent.
Discussion

Having a structured system in place to document the landscape of nurse scientist work can help better articulate the impact and functions of this unique nursing position.

Further work is needed to test the sustainability and utility of data generated using a “Research and EBP Consultation Tracking Form”.
Clinical Implications

Nurse Scientists present a unique role in nursing.

Nurse Scientists can actively support and promote research and EBP in the hospital setting, as required by Magnet®.

Health systems interested in engaging nurses in research and EBP for Magnet® or other purposes should explore hiring a nurse scientist.
Questions? Thank you
