

# Nurse Residency Programs, A Solution to the Nursing Shortage

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### INTRODUCTION

In healthcare there is a substantial lack of nurses compared to the number of patients that need care. The lack of nurses leads to unsafe nursing ratios in various departments and hospitals, thus increasing the risk for never events. Many hospitals have integrated a nurse residency program (NRP) for graduate nurses in order to combat the nursing shortage problem.

- “A NRP is meant to help recent graduates’ transition into clinical practice. Residency programs typically last from 6 to 12 months and serve as an opportunity for graduates to hone critical-thinking and evidence-based decision-making skills” (“NursingCas”, 2018, para. 1)
- “[A graduate nurse] works with one or more preceptors to receive the training and support necessary to develop the competencies needed to deliver safe, high quality nursing care” (Holle & Smith, 2018, para.3).

### SIGNIFICANCE

- “Recent projections indicate that the current nursing shortage in the United States will rise by 30% or a deficit of > 900,000 RNs by the year 2030” (Woten & Smith, 2018, para. 1).
- “New graduate RNs comprise > 10% of all hospital staff nurses and have a higher rate of turnover during their first year of employment compared to more experienced RNs. New graduate turnover in the first year of employment is 35-60%” (Woten & Smith, 2018, para. 3).
- “Nurse retention following implementation of a nursing residency-style orientation program has been reported to be as high as 100%” (Holle & Smith, 2018, para.4).

### POSITION STATEMENT

NRPs will better prepare novice nurses to enter the nursing profession and ultimately decrease the nursing shortage in healthcare today

### SUPPORT FOR POSITION

A major importance of NRPs is that they, “create a support system of other new graduates that are in the same stage of transition; solidarity often mitigates the consequences of stress such as “burnout and compassion fatigue.” These programs increase confidence, self-proclaimed proficiency, fulfillment, and a decrease in distress” (Perron et al., 2019, p. 50).

Studies of existing NRPs have shown that, “they had a positive impact on reducing turnover, as has been demonstrated by other studies. The support received by the new nurses during the residency program may have made them feel more valued in the organization, and thus they remained in their jobs” (Wolford et al., 2019, p. 47).

“A positive correlation has been found between NRP implementation and job satisfaction among nurse graduates, along with a higher level of commitment to the healthcare facility. This finding has a direct impact on retention rates of nurse graduates” (Blevins, 2016, p. 367).

“Moreover, multiple sources suggest that nurse residency programs also increased new graduate job satisfaction and performance, particularly in-patient assessment skills, communication, and utilization of technology” (Perron et al., 2019, p. 50).

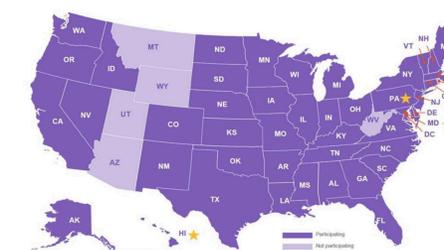
### IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

When there is a nursing shortage it can cause detrimental outcomes to patients that are trying to receive care.

- “These programs [NRPs] have been found to reduce turnover, resulting in a more stable work force that is comfortable with the policies of the hospital, and thus positioned to deliver safer care” (Perron et al., 2019, p. 51).
- NRPs have been shown to help NGRN (New Graduate Registered Nurse) to improve upon their competency skills which, “increases the quality of nursing care and job satisfaction; increased job satisfaction is associated with increased retention” (Woten & Smith, 2018, para. 7).

There are programs available to be implemented in hospitals that are associated with respectable organizations, such as the American Association of College of Nursing (AACN).

- “The Vizient/AACN program supports professional development with a data-driven solution allowing organizations to compare against selected peers and network with others in the NRP program. NRP empowers nurses, increases retention while reducing turnover costs, and improves patient safety” (AACN, 2020, para. 3)



(AACN, 2020)

### CONCLUSION

NRPs are an effective way to better prepare novice nurses to enter the profession field upon graduation, which will ultimately lead to a decrease in the nursing shortage that healthcare is experiencing today.

- NRPs show increased retention rates
- NRPs increase the quality of nursing care being performed by NGRNs
- NRPs need to be implemented in 50% of our healthcare systems



(Westby, 2019)

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