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**A Strategy for Increasing Nephrology Nurse Certification**

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**Problem:** Certification in one's specialty is a means of acknowledging and ensuring the individual nurse's level of knowledge and expertise. Certification has been linked to a sense of personal and professional accomplishment, increased job satisfaction and confidence. A survey of dialysis staff in an acute hospital based unit revealed a certification rate of 59% with additional staff expressing a desire to become certified.

**Approach:** The staff and management team met and developed a strategy for facilitating certification. The strategy included a series of twelve one hour nephrology nursing review classes using the "Core Curriculum for Nephrology Nursing as the guide for class content. Speakers for the topics were selected based on their knowledge and level of expertise on the subject matter. Arrangements were made to be a host site for the certification exam to decrease the potential barrier of access to testing. Staff participation included the creation of a poster by a staff nurse illustrating a bus displaying the pictures of staff currently certified and depicted as passengers on the bus. The title of the poster was "Get on the Bus". There was significant staff interest in becoming a passenger on the bus alongside their peers.

**Outcome:** Eleven nurses voluntarily participated in the on-site classes and all participated in the certification exam resulting in an increase to 85% certified. Staff pictures were added to the bus poster as a means of recognition along with providing a post certification gift and adding their name to a certification plaque. The bus-poster has since been used as a successful mechanism to encourage staff to become certified and join their peers as a passenger certified in Nephrology Nursing.

**Implication:** The objective of this collaborative project between staff and management was to increase the number of certified nephrology nurses in a hospital based acute dialysis unit. This project demonstrated the success of participation in structured classes along with a visual means via a poster format to encourage and engage staff in the certification process.

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