



A Look at Systems

Manifestations of Systemic Problems on the Organizational Level

Betty Pilous, R.N., M.H.S.A., C.P.H.Q.

System Problems

1. Inconsistent assignments
2. Staffing shortages or irregularities
3. High turnover or agency usage
4. Poor culture for communication among staff
5. Poor systems for monitoring
6. Poor accountability (not blame)
7. No shared data

Stabilize the Staffing

- Consistent assignments
 - Small shared work groups (QE foundation, neighborhoods)
 - Hiring smart—(Microsystems)

Stable Staffing Allows...

- Maintenance of bathing schedules when skin checks are done routinely
- Health changes to be quickly identified even in memory deficient residents
- Improved awareness of preventive care done for each resident/patient

Study: Staffing Effects on Quality

- Two nursing homes with permanent assignments compared with two nursing homes with rotating assignments.
 - Residents living in permanent assignment nursing homes received significantly higher ratings of personal appearance and hygiene than residents in rotating assignment homes.
 - Nurse aides working in permanent assignment homes reported higher job satisfaction than those working in rotating assignment homes.

Burgio LD, Fisher SE, Fairchild JK, Scilley K, Hardin M. "Quality of Care in the Nursing Home: Effects of Staff Assignment and Work Shift." The Gerontologist 44.3 (2004): 368-377.

Other Clinical Factors

- Regular staff are more aware of:
 - Contenance issues
 - Fluid needs
 - Snack preferences
 - Other life choices
 - Family wishes
 - Daily changes in health
 - Pain management needs

Study: Primary Nursing in LTC

- Care Outcomes
 - **One year after implementation - 75% reduction in the incidence of decubitus ulcers**
 - 18% decrease in patient death rate
 - 11% increase in patient discharge to lower levels of care
 - Two years after—36% increase in the number of ambulatory patients
- Nursing Staff Outcomes
 - One year after implementation—turnover rate declined by 29%
 - After implementation nurses reported feeling more accountable by 26%

Campbell S. "Primary nursing: It works in long-term care." Journal of Gerontological Nursing 8 (1985): 12-16

Reliability of the System

- Communication between staff members
 - Direct care staff see action as a result of reports
 - Charge nurse trusts and values reports from direct care staff
 - Physician or nurse practitioner trusts and values charge nurse reports
 - Direct care staff give/receive feedback on new care orders

Another System

- Training and education
 - At orientation and ongoing
- Mentoring

And Finally

- Accountability through monitoring and measuring
- Open reporting of the measures



Ohio's Medicare Quality Improvement Organization

Ohio KePRO

**Rock Run Center, Suite 100
5700 Lombardo Center Drive
Seven Hills, Ohio 44131**

Tel: 1.800.385.5080

Fax 216.447.7925

www.ohiokepro.com