



Nurses: Facing Challenges in the 21st Century

PREVIEW

Beyond the Nursing Shortage...

How to Cope?

Who's Listening?

By Kathy Quan RN BSN PHN

Author of
The Everything New Nurse Book and
TheNursingSite.com



A SupportForNurses.com Publication
www.SupportForNurses.com



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Nursing Shortage: Recession & the Expected Mass Exodus of Nurses	6
Temporarily Forestalled by the Great Recession	
What Happens When the Economy Recovers?	
What's Being Done? (Education Funding, Immigration)	
Health Care Reform: New Demands	11
Revolving Door Patients: Reducing Readmissions	12
How Hospitals and Home Health are Affected by Readmissions (Medicare Compare Sites & Pay 4 Performance Issues)	
Overview: Health Care Crisis	16
Cost Savings Issues (examples of the cost of dressings, catheters etc.)	
Patient Safety & Quality: Reimbursement Issues	18
DO NOT PAY and NEVER EVENTS Lists	
Reimbursement Issues	
Hospital Acquired Conditions-- Preventing and reporting (hospital vs home care)	
Infection Control	
Medicaid and Private Insurance Following the Lead	
What Nurses Need to Know	27
How the Nursing Shortage Affects Care (i.e. Nurse-to-Patient Ratios, Mandatory Overtime)	
Get Involved in the Strategic Planning/Management Process	
Stay In Touch with Legislation & Nursing	
Bibliography	34
About the Author	35

This TOOLKIT is designed to be presented along with a
Power Point slide presentation.
It can be a group presentation, or an independent study project.

This document may be given as a handout to accompany the Power Point
slides, or used only as a guide by the Facilitator.

Read the manual out loud for supplemental information.
Follow along. Direct Activities & Discussions and change slides as directed.
There are no right or wrong answers. The presentation is designed to be
customized to your facility.

(Some additional information may need to be supplied.)
The slide show is setup for the Manual Advancement of the slides.

The Sections of this presentation can be divided into separate 30-60
minute lessons as desired, or presented as a whole.

The goal of the TOOLKIT is to help nurses understand the challenges they
face in this new century, the reasons and rationale for them, and how to
cope with these challenges.

Nurses will be asked to use Critical Thinking Skills for a variety of
ACTIVITIES & DISCUSSIONS throughout.

Foreign trained and new grad nurses need to come up to speed on these
issues too, and be prepared to hit the ground running.

INTRODUCTION

The nursing profession is one of the most rewarding and yet one of the most challenging professions. Nursing has come a long ways from the days when nurses not only cared for patients but scrubbed floors and cleaned chamber pots and rolled their own bandages.

Nurses are not handmaidens to physicians, but rather are a strong, vital, independent part of the health care team. They work along side others such as physicians, dentists, therapists, pharmacists, social workers and dietitians. Nurses are often said to be the backbone of the health care system. *Consider what health care would be without nurses.*

The nursing profession has evolved over many hundreds of years. In fact the first nurses were men of a religious order. Only the men were felt to be pure enough to be nurses and to care for the sick.

Of course, Florence Nightingale put the profession on its feet during the Crimean War when she proved that sanitary conditions were necessary to survival for the wounded soldiers. Nursing leaders down through time have added valuable research, information and theories to help nursing grow into the great profession it is today.

Today, nurses are faced with a plethora of infection control issues. Nurses have learned how to live with, work around and avoid being infected with HIV and AIDS. Super germs such as MRSA and VRE have been controlled, but still present significant risks to patients and all health care professionals.

Tomorrow nurses will face issues such as the threat of the H1N1 Swine Flu Pandemic as it enters into its first real flu season. Nurses will be expected to take the lead on being vaccinated against the virus and in educating the public in how to control and prevent the spread.

Nurses also face the continued growth of a shortage of nurses which for the brief moment appears to have slowed because of the economic downturn of the Great Recession. Many nurses have returned to the field from retirement and semiretirement after facing the impact of lost jobs and retirement funds among a variety of other financial matters from the recession. But with an ever aging workforce, this temporary reprieve is poised to become a nightmare if there is a mass exodus of older nurses once the economy recovers.

At a time when nurses are challenged to the core, Medicare and other reimbursement sources are demanding specific quality improvements and enforcing a Do Not Pay list for errors and less than perfect care.

With the advent of health care reform, millions of Americans stand to gain affordable access to health care. This translates to a tremendous increase in the number of patients seeking care in a system that is already challenged with shortages of health care professionals such as nurses and physicians.

Nurses will be expected to become supreme educators and help patients and family members assume self care (with or without home health care services) after discharge without incurring unnecessary and repeated readmissions.

To help contain the skyrocketing costs of medical care, nurses have had to become business managers and learn about comparing the cost effectiveness of products such as bandages and central line kits.

More than ever before, it is going to be important for nurses to become active voices in support of the profession to maintain and improve the working conditions in order to help recruit and retain nurses to meet the needs of an aging and growing population. Nurses need to speak up and become politically informed, active supporters of the profession with the public as well as with their legislators.

Nurses need to become active participants in the strategic planning for their facilities, and to continue to be strong advocates for their patient's rights.

For new nurses, as well as foreign trained nurses, it is said to take a full year to become confident and to feel like real nurses. With the growing shortage of nurses and the possible critical impact of the rapid retirement of nurses, it is important for new and foreign trained nurses to come to the job better prepared to meet the needs of the public. This means these new grads and foreign trained nurses need to have improved written and oral language skills, along with stronger time management, organizational and critical thinking skills.

Nurse educators and staff development experts need to prepare these nurses to meet the growing needs of the profession not only for the betterment of the facility but for the ultimate survival of the individual nurses. This places a tremendous demand on nurse educators.

This Toolkit will introduce nurses to the demands and expectations of the next portion of the 21st century. It will serve to help nurse educators with the job of enlightening and educating nurses about what to expect and how to cope with changes imposed by such sources as Medicare, Medicaid and private health insurances. Nurses can also learn how to advocate for themselves as professionals so that a crisis can be avoided and the needs of a growing and aging population are met.

Overview: Health Care Crisis

How nurses contribute to the high cost of health care

- By not submitting vouchers or billing for equipment
- By using multiple products when one or two will work just as well such as for wound or decub care
- Convenience: does every patient need that bedside package (wash basin emesis basin, etc.?)

©2009 by SupportForNurses.com All Rights Reserved, No portion of this publication may be reproduced, excerpted, or used in any way without the expressed written permission of the publisher.

Overview: Health Care Crisis

ACTIVITY & DISCUSSION

- What cost savings measures are or should be in place in your facility?
- How can patient education help decrease costs of health care?
- Does the Internet help or hinder patient education?

©2009 by SupportForNurses.com All Rights Reserved. No portion of this publication may be reproduced, excerpted, or used in any way without the expressed written permission of the publisher.