

Preparing Navy Nurse Reservist to be Anytime. Anywhere. Effective Leadership Development Strategies for Junior Officers in the Navy Nurse Corps Reserves-A Literature Review

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Objectives:

1. Identify effective leadership development strategies to increase leadership competence for Junior Officers in the United States Navy Reserve Nurse Corps
2. Describe search methods and summarize evidence from the literature review addressing nursing leadership development
3. Provide a list of proposed interventions and strategies for leadership development based on evidence derived from the literature

Introduction

The United States Navy Nurse Corps-Reserve-Component (USNNC-RC) plays an instrumental role in providing strategic depth and operational readiness during times of war and missions. Composed of an estimated 1150 nurses the USNNC-RC accounts for nearly 28% percent of the total Navy Nursing Force.

As Commissioned Officers, Navy Nurses are expected to possess strong leadership skills and proficiency in key leadership competencies. Evidence suggests that a lack of leadership competence could prove detrimental to the Navy mission, as poor leadership capabilities have historically shown to have a direct impact on the retention and recruitment of the work force, work force morale and work force safety. Poor leadership can also impact the delivery of quality patient care and the financial stability of the organization.

Presently, there are eight recommended leadership competencies Navy Nurses should be proficient in including: **communication, clinical proficiency, personal growth, leadership abilities, knowledge of regulatory guidelines, management abilities, professional development, and operational and deployment readiness** but few steps have been taken to increase these competencies among the Navy Nurse Corps Reservists in one particular detachment.

Currently, there is no coordinated and consistently applied strategy in place during Navy Reserve weekends to ensure leadership skills are being developed in the eight recommended leadership competencies by Junior Officers in the US Navy Reserve-Nurse Corps.

Although the US Navy has a wealth of resources available to increase leadership competence these resources are scattered, difficult to locate and not being used effectively to ensure USNNC-RC Officers are fully prepared to lead. To determine the most effective strategies to increase leadership competence a comprehensive literature review was completed. A summary of the evidence and proposed solutions are presented.

Literature Search Results



Results



Search Methods

A literature review was completed using three databases: PubMed, CINAHL (Cumulative Index of Nursing and Allied Health Literature), and DTIC (Defense Technical Information Center). The search comprised articles published between January 2008-January 2015. Search terms included: nursing leadership development, nursing leadership competence, navy nurse and military nursing leadership. The initial search returned 1199 articles. After exclusions and refinements a total of 46 articles were included in the literature review.

Review of evidence: Forty-six articles were selected. No randomized control studies were found applicable to this question. Types of evidence included quasi-experimental, meta-synthesis and qualitative studies, literature reviews, expert opinions, dissertations and congressional hearings. Despite the lack of experimental studies, the strength of the literature provided strong, consistent evidence throughout, each suggesting the utilization of similar strategies to increase leadership competence.

Method of grading evidence: The Johns Hopkins Evidence Appraisal Tool was used to evaluate the evidence. Literature was graded based on evidence type; strongest grades were given to quasi-experimental and qualitative studies and weakest ratings given to expert opinions.

Summary/Synthesis of findings: The evidence proposed leadership development strategies be systematic, reliable and life-long. Effective leadership development strategies included:

- Mentoring-14 articles
- Training/Education-10 articles
- Coaching -7 articles
- Leadership Academies/Programs -7 article
- Personal Development-5 article
- Progressive Responsibilities - 4 articles
- Field Experience - 4 articles

The evidence recommended formal leadership programs be developed and strategies be customized to individual capabilities and learning styles. Novice nurse leaders should be given progressive leadership responsibilities to apply newly acquired leadership skills.



Next steps: implement a piloted 5-month leadership development project with a small component of the Navy Nurse Corps. The project will consist of face-to-face coaching sessions and E-learning modules, using group discussions, role playing, simulations and other recommended strategies. The project's effectiveness will be evaluated and potentially used throughout the Navy Nurse Corps Reserves.

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