



WHITEPAPER

NURSE MANAGER SUCCESSION PLANNING IS BROKEN

HOW TO FIX IT





Arguably, nurse managers have one of the toughest roles in healthcare. Their responsibility comes with oversight of direct care nurses, the work environment, job satisfaction, retention, quality nursing care, as well as patient safety and clinical outcomes. Building on top of their responsibility, their spans of control are often above recommended numbers and rising, their role continues to expand and change, and the expectations of them are increasing.

Unfortunately, given today's daunting staffing environment, some healthcare organizations push nurses into management with only a couple years under their belts. Meaning these nurse leaders are lacking in both clinical and managerial experience. Nurse managers essentially hold the keys to multi-million-dollar business units, and yet, when we look at how they're prepared for management success, preparation is limited, if not non-existent.

Very often, when a first-time nurse manager is promoted into the role, we hear "we promote our most clinically proficient nurse, in hopes that clinical skill translates to management skill." Unfortunately, this doesn't always translate – either the leadership abilities aren't there and/or for some, the bedside role is the best fit. Further, poor management can have reverberating impacts on the satisfaction and retention of staff as well as managers' own satisfaction and turnover when they are not in the right role.

So, how do we break a systemic issue that has plagued hospitals for years and ensure bedside nurses have managers who are the right fit and prepared to lead? It must begin well before a nurse enters a management role. It starts with building leadership skills while nurses are at the bedside. By doing so, organizations can allow nurses to hone those skills, practice at the top of their license, and gain a sense of which career path is a best fit for their skills and interests. Moreover, organizations are building a bench of nurses who are better equipped and empowered should they step into a leadership position.

How can organizations proactively create a leadership mindset among bedside nurses that will bring value to their current roles and beyond without burdening them with time-consuming and expensive training solutions? At Lead for Care, we believe that organizations need to tackle this historic problem with a modern approach - pair microlearning content (10-minutes at a time) with real-time application and guided mentorship. This three-pronged approach allows nurses at the bedside to build leadership skills that support them now and into the future.

The benefits? One, provide career clarity. About 30% of nurses who participate in these programs adjust what they see as their next career step when they understand what leadership is – whether they now see themselves moving into a formal leadership position or staying at the bedside. Two, by infusing a leadership mindset, we see nurses empowered to step into informal leadership roles like shared governance, unit-based councils, committees, etc. At the same time, we see those who move into leadership now have a foundation of skills needed to be successful with the changing and intensity of the nurse manager role. Three, through the program's mentorship they have a mentor network to support them beyond the leadership program. Best of all, Lead for Care has priced the program that fits within today's tight budgets.



How can you do this?

At Lead for Care, we believe that bedside nurses benefit when education folds into the nursing workflow and structure. We know that nurses don't have much time, and that there's value in pulling nurses together through mentorship as they learn. In fact, it's been shown to bring joy into nursing.

To accomplish this, Lead for Care's Bedside Nurse Leadership Development Program pairs 10-minute accredited leadership content, with real-time application, and guided mentorship. With this approach both mentees and mentors are provided key materials for success not just in the LFC Program, but beyond.

Mentees experience:

- 98% say that developing leadership skills has been valuable to their professional growth
- 95% have learned a good deal about the key competencies needed in today's healthcare environment like communication, resiliency, critical thinking, and more.
- 89% Are highly confident in their leadership abilities after program completion
- 88% Highly value mentorship
- 30% Improvement in career clarity (stay at the bedside vs leadership for their career track)

Mentors experience:

- 97% agree LFC's Quick Connect exercised helped them to connect on a more personal level with their mentee
- Nearly 80% appreciated the tools like the mentor guide, facilitation prompts, lessons and tips to help them with serving as a mentor.
- 93% likely to continue being a mentor
- 78% of mentors felt that the training and resources helped them mentor in the LFC program and beyond

Organizations have seen:

95%

of participants indicated they will make changes to practice based on what they learned

~60%

of participants get more involved in the organization (join committees and unit-based councils, get additional certifications, mentor others, move into leadership positions)

3,400%

ROI in turnover alone

97.5%

retention

17%

Improvement in Patient Safety Advocacy

Want to learn how your organization can deploy a program for bedside nurses that arms them with leadership skills to be applied while at the bedside today and a foundation for future success in a nurse manager role should they go in that direction? Organizations that support nurses with skills have seen improved career path clarity, increased nurse involvement, and significantly lower turnover. If interested in learning more contact Heidi Kamm (hkamm@leadforcare.com).

