



# Development and Implementation of Skills Check-off Blitz to Evaluate and Validate Unit Based Competencies



## Quality Improvement

By Sandy Davidson, RN, PCCN, CVRN

Assistant Nurse Manager

Intermediate Care Unit Salem Hospital



**Salem Hospital**

*A part of Salem Health*



# Objectives

- Define competency and how it relates to nursing practice.
- Learn strategies for developing and implementing skills competency validation.
- Identify cost saving measures beneficial to the Nursing Unit.
- Recognize benefits of interpersonal collaboration and how it impacts staff satisfaction and patient outcomes.

# Development and Implementation of Skills Check-off Blitz to Evaluate and Validate Unit Based Competencies

## Background:

- While the hospital has basic skills that are required of all nursing staff, each individual unit has a unique set of skills which nurses are required to perform competently. Competency is defined as the ability to safely and adequately perform a specific task or roll. To ensure that nurses are competent to perform certain low-volume/high-risk tasks we developed a unit based competency check-off system.

## Purpose:

- The purpose of this presentation is to describe how we developed and implemented a skills competency check-off blitz for nursing staff while staying within budget.





# Competence

“An individual who demonstrates competence is performing successfully at an expected level” (Dixon, 2010).

The four key components of competence are:

1. **Knowledge** – Thinking and understanding.
2. **Skills**- Psychomotor, communication, interpersonal and diagnostic.
3. **Ability** – Capacity to act effectively.
4. **Judgment**- Critical thinking, problem solving, ethical reasoning and decision making.

# Formulating the Idea /Developing the Plan

## Competencies Chosen Based on Unit Needs:

- Low volume/High risk
  - High Volume/problematic
  - Never event/near miss
  - New or changes in procedure/policy
- (Limited to 4-5 per year)

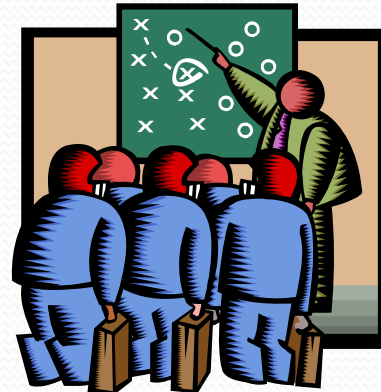


## Presentation of Competencies:

- Present each skill individually at staff meetings
- Provide hands-on demonstration
- Provide Power Point, hand outs, videos, other resources
- Provide each nurse with quiz

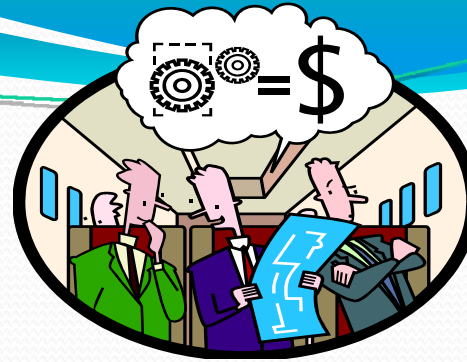
# Planning (First Blitz)

- Combined all previously demonstrated skills into one patient care scenario for hands-on staff check-off.
- Calculated time needed for individual check-offs/Blitz.
- Scheduled time needed in skills lab.
- Gathered patient mannequins and supplies (some were improvised others were outdated supplies from our unit).
- Recruited volunteers from staff to assist with check-offs.
- ...and we PRACTICED!!!





# Scheduling (First Blitz)



- Our first Blitz team was comprised of 2 staff members running the check-off scenarios with 2 mannequins in the skills lab over a period of 3 different 8 hour shifts.
- We recruited 1 RN from our staff to remain on the unit during the Blitz to provide “helping hands” so that the RNs with assignments could safely leave the area for their check-offs.
- Knowing that budget and overtime is always an issue, we strategically scheduled RNs to check –off during their already scheduled shifts.
- We scheduled our night shift RNs 2 at a time in 3 different 15 minute increments to check-off immediately following their night shifts.
- By doing this we minimized the amount of overtime accrued by staff having to come in on their day off as has always been the practice in the past.

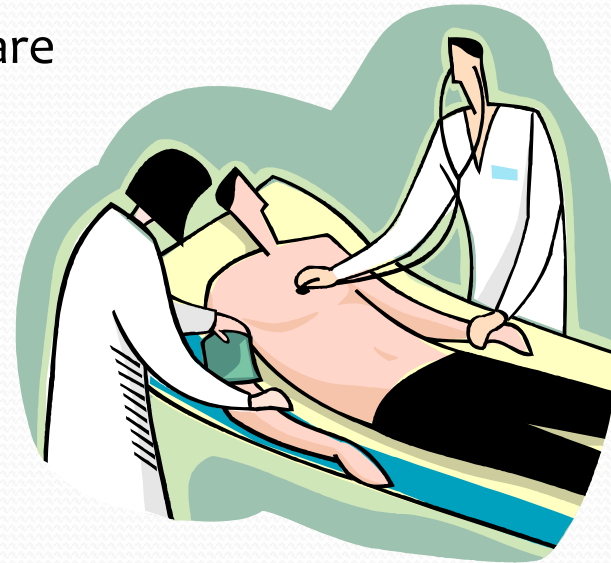
# The First Check-Off Blitz

The first Blitz rolled out much better than anticipated...

- Staff were able to participate in a hands-on non-threatening environment.
- Staff was able to ask questions and try new skills.
- Unit leaders were running the check-offs and were therefore able to observe first hand the technical and critical thinking skills of the staff first hand.
- Staff gave glowing feedback stating they had learned a lot and had fun doing it... they were so excited they even offered suggestions for the next time!

Competency skills we validated were...

- ABG Interpretation
- SBAR reporting
- Blood Administration
- Passey Muir Valve Competency
- Trach Care





# Plan... Do... Study... Act...

## Our findings...

- ✓ What was thought to be nearly impossible can be done!
- ✓ We can validate the competencies of our entire staff in a limited amount of time!
- ✓ We can save money!!!
- ✓ We can make this even better next year!

## Based on staff feed back...

- ✓ Hands on learning and validation is well-accepted.
- ✓ Staff feel engaged and want to be more involved .
- ✓ CNAs also want to be included.
- ✓ Staff has specific validation requests, including Code Blue.

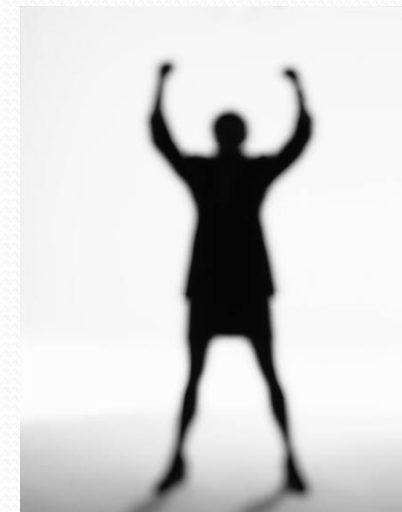


# Plan... Do... Study... Act...

## How We Improved

For our Second Annual Blitz...

- ✓ We continued with the same strategic scheduling plan in intervals (adding more time for night shift immediately before their scheduled shifts).
- ✓ We added a third mannequin and check -off station.
- ✓ We recruited 3 more Education Team members for a total of 6, enabling us to maximize our check-off process while providing better assignment coverage on the unit.
- ✓ We included CNAs and their own competencies.
- ✓ We incorporated Code Blue into our scenario.
- ✓ We continued to save money!!!



# Results

- ✓ We effectively improved our process of validating the competency of our entire nursing staff which included 57 RNs and 19 CNAs over a span of three twelve hour day shifts.
- ✓ We were able to strategically schedule the majority of our staff while they were already working enabling us to drastically reduce overtime and save money.
- ✓ Estimated savings in just overtime alone is approximately \$5,000.
- ✓ Feed back from staff indicates increased satisfaction and engagement while promoting learning in non-threatening and even “fun” environment.
- ✓ Unit leadership team was able to assess and evaluate critical thinking skills first hand which is an improvement over the previous computer based validation.



## Reference:

Dixon, John. *Validating Competency: It's time to Retire Annual Skills Day Check-offs*. National Teaching Institute presentation, Washington, D. C., (2010).