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American Nurses Credentialing Center: Nurse Executive



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Question: 1

A hospital is experiencing a high turnover rate among its nursing staff. As part of efforts to improve retention, the nurse executive should prioritize which of the following?

- A. Increasing the nurse-to-patient ratio significantly.
- B. Enhancing the physical security measures within the hospital.
- C. Implementing a relaxed dress code policy.
- D. Increasing the frequency and depth of exit interviews.

Answer: D

Explanation:

Increasing the frequency and depth of exit interviews allows for more insight into the underlying cause of high turnover, informing future interventions.

Enhancing the physical security measures within the hospital, increasing the nurse-to-patient ratio, and implementing a relaxed dress code policy may all be appropriate interventions depending on the underlying factors for high turnover, however, assessing the underlying cause first is most important.

Question: 2

In response to a sudden increase in patient volume, a nurse executive must quickly adapt the staffing schedule. What is the best strategy to quickly ensure adequate staffing without increasing burnout?

- A. Offer incentive pay for extra shifts.
- B. Double the nurse-to-patient ratio.
- C. Implement cross-training for all staff.
- D. Use agency nurses to fill gaps.

Answer: A

Explanation:

Offering incentive pay for extra shifts provides an immediate solution to staffing needs while motivating staff to volunteer for extra shifts without mandating overtime.

Doubling the nurse-to-patient ratio is not a plan for addressing immediate staffing needs. Using agency nurses could be a viable option but may not be as immediate or cost-effective as offering incentive pay. While cross-training is beneficial for flexibility, it does not address the immediate need for more staff and will take time to be an effective intervention.

Question: 3

In the wake of a mass casualty incident, what is the first priority for a nurse executive in the emergency department?

- A. Adjust triaging processes to better handle high volumes.
- B. Communicating with local media to provide updates and information.
- C. Ensuring psychological support for staff and patients.
- D. Activating the hospital's mass casualty incident plan.

Answer: D

Explanation:

Activating the mass casualty incident plan is the first priority for a nurse executive to manage resources, staff, and patient flow effectively.

Psychological support is crucial from a long-term perspective but is secondary to immediate medical and organizational responses. Triage is a critical component of the response, but changes to the triage process should follow the activation of the mass casualty plan to ensure an organized approach.

Communication with media is important for public information but it is not the immediate priority during the initial response phase.

Question: 4

A recent policy change has increased the nursing documentation requirements for Medicare reimbursement. What action should the nurse executive take to ensure compliance with the new Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) documentation standards?

- A. Decrease the number of Medicare patients admitted to reduce documentation workload.
- B. Outsource documentation tasks to a third-party company to reduce administrative strain.
- C. Train staff on the importance of documentation accuracy and completeness.
- D. Implement a policy penalizing staff for documentation errors and incentivizing adherence to the new standards.

Answer: C

Explanation:

Training staff ensures that they understand the new requirements and the importance of accurate and complete documentation, directly addressing CMS standards.

Decreasing the number of Medicare patients does not address the issue of compliance and could negatively impact the facility's mission and financial stability. Penalizing staff might create a negative work environment and does not necessarily improve documentation practices. Additionally, training is more necessary for optimal adherence than incentivization of the staff. Outsourcing could introduce risks related to privacy and accuracy, and could delay compliance with the new changes; direct training and oversight of staff is a more effective approach to ensuring compliance.

Question: 5

A hospital's recent performance review shows a decline in adherence to heart failure core measures. What is the first step a nurse executive should take to address this issue?

- A. Implement disciplinary action for non-compliance.
- B. Conduct a root cause analysis to understand the barriers to adherence.
- C. Increase the nurse-to-patient ratio in the cardiac unit and upgrade existing technology used by the unit.
- D. Re-educate nursing staff on current heart failure management guidelines.

Answer: B

Explanation:

Identifying the root causes of non-adherence allows for targeted interventions that are more likely to be effective.

While education is important, understanding why the decline occurred is essential before implementing solutions. Disciplinary actions may not address the underlying issues and could negatively affect staff morale. Although nurse staffing levels and technology are important, changing them may not directly address the issue of core measure adherence. Further assessment should be performed prior to creating new interventions.

Question: 6

Which approach to handling a report of a significant medication error is most appropriate?

- A. Discouraging the reporting of specific details to avoid impact on the individual involved.
- B. Evaluating who made the error to reduce further risks from that individual.
- C. Analyzing the error to identify system failures.
- D. Ensuring staff exposure to the error report is minimized to reduce litigation risks.

Answer: C

Explanation:

Analysis of the error to identify system failures fosters a culture of safety by focusing on systemic solutions rather than individual blame.

Focusing on assigning blame to an individual does not contribute to understanding the systemic issues that may have led to the error. Avoiding analysis of the specific factors influencing the development of the error misses a critical opportunity for learning and improvement. Keeping errors secret undermines trust and transparency, which are essential components of a safety culture, and minimizes the potential educational value of the error and the increased safety it provides.

Question: 7

A nurse executive reviews patient satisfaction surveys and identifies a need to improve the hospital's environment to enhance patient experiences. Which initiative would be most effective in creating a healing environment?

- A. Expanding the hospital cafeteria to include more dining options.
- B. Increasing the brightness of lighting in patient rooms.
- C. Providing patients with upgraded television and entertainment systems.
- D. Incorporating nature and art into patient and public areas.

Answer: D

Explanation:

Evidence suggests that incorporating elements of nature and art into healthcare settings can reduce stress and improve patient outcomes, contributing to a more healing environment.

While lighting is important, simply increasing brightness does not necessarily contribute to a healing environment and can sometimes be counterproductive. While more dining options may improve the hospital stay, it does not directly influence the healing aspects of the patient environment.

Entertainment options can improve patient satisfaction but do not contribute as significantly to the healing environment as the presence of nature and art.

Question: 8

A nurse executive is facing a situation where the emergency department is understaffed for the upcoming weekend. What is the best immediate action to ensure adequate staffing?

- A. Float nurses from other departments.
- B. Request volunteers for overtime.
- C. Temporarily close the department.
- D. Assign mandatory overtime for all staff.

Answer: B

Explanation:

Requesting volunteers for overtime allows for immediate staffing needs to be met while respecting staff autonomy and potentially avoiding burnout.

Mandatory overtime can lead to staff dissatisfaction and should be a last resort when no other viable option exists. Closing the department is not feasible for an essential service like the emergency department. Floating nurses from other departments may be a viable option, but does not provide nurses with the same skills that experienced emergency nurses are able to provide, making it a less appealing option than seeking volunteer nurses from the department.

Question: 9

A nurse executive is involved in a case where a patient refuses a life-saving treatment due to personal beliefs. According to the ANA Code of Ethics, the executive's approach should ultimately be to do which of the following?

- A. Persuade the patient to accept treatment by explaining the consequences of refusal.
- B. Override the patient's decision in the interest of saving their life by having the patient declared suicidal if possible.

- C. Respect the patient's decision and ensure their comfort and dignity are maintained.
- D. Consult the hospital's legal team to force treatment.

Answer: C

Explanation:

Respecting the patient's decision and ensuring their comfort and dignity are maintained respects the patient's autonomy and right to make informed decisions about their care. This action is most in line with the ANA Code of Ethics.

While education is important, ultimately respecting the patient's autonomy and decision, even when it conflicts with medical advice, is a fundamental ethical principle. Persuading the patient to accept treatment is a correct initial approach, but cannot be the ultimate decision if the patient continues to refuse. Overriding the patient's decision without their consent is unethical and violates the principles of autonomy and respect outlined in the ANA Code of Ethics. Seeking to force treatment through legal means disregards the patient's autonomy and the ethical principle of respect for persons.

Question: 10

A nurse leader overseeing several patient care units decides to implement a laissez-faire leadership style to promote innovation and self-direction among the nursing staff. Which of the following actions best exemplifies this leadership style?

- A. The nurse leader provides general goals for the units but allows the nursing staff to determine the best methods to achieve these goals.
- B. The nurse leader implements a structured mentorship program where experienced nurses are assigned to guide newer staff members.
- C. The nurse leader frequently holds meetings to directly assign specific tasks to each nurse and closely monitors their progress.
- D. The nurse leader sets clear, detailed guidelines for daily operations and expects strict adherence from the staff.

Answer: A

Explanation:

Laissez-faire leadership is typically uninvolved, allowing teams a great deal of latitude with minimal leadership involvement. Offering general goals while allowing staff the freedom to choose how to achieve them embodies the essence of laissez-faire leadership.

Closely monitoring progress and directly assigning tasks contradicts the laissez-faire approach, which emphasizes autonomy and minimal direct supervision. Setting detailed guidelines and expecting strict adherence aligns more with an authoritarian leadership style. While a mentorship program promotes development, the structured nature of assigning mentors suggests more direct oversight than typical of laissez-faire leadership.

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