

Engaging Nurses in a Unionized Environment Through Shared Governance

Melissa Fritz DNP, RN, ACNS-BC, CENP, FAONL

Elizabeth Keating, DNP, RN

Methodist Hospital, St Louis Park, Minnesota (Park Nicollet)

Introduction

After COVID-19 and an RN workforce stoppage, a metro unionized hospital needed to reinvigorate and reengage nursing staff. Select nurses were involved in some quality committee efforts but were disconnected and inconsistent, and priorities were not always aligned with organizational goals. Patient experience metrics were trending down, internal professional development opportunities had dried up, nurses were leaving the workforce, the safety survey results showed a need to improve psychological safety, and bedside safety handoff was not being performed. Recognizing the crucial role of shared governance, the new chief nursing officer stepped in with a clear vision.

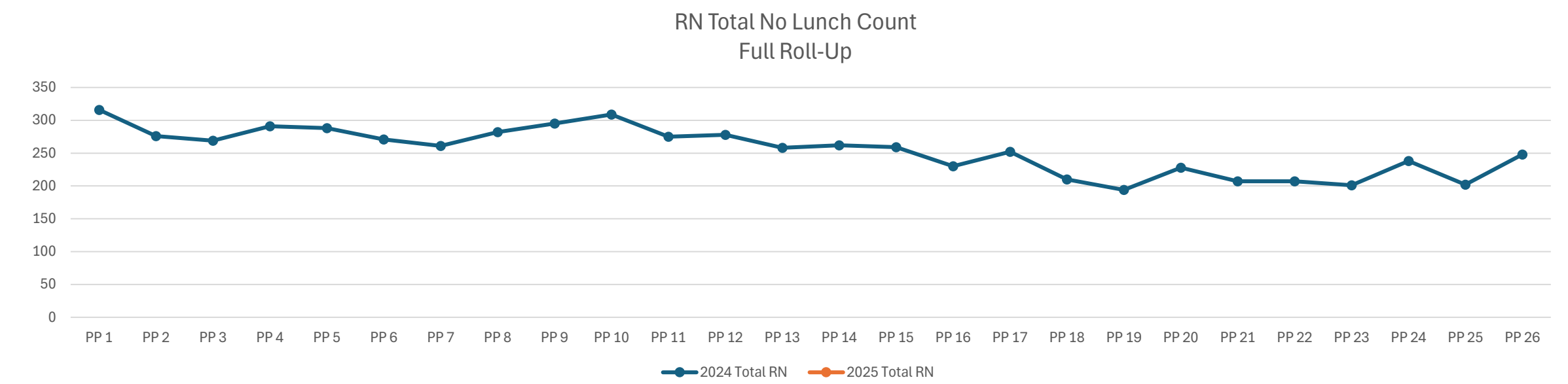
Objectives

- Improved well-being, psychological and physical safety
- Improved quality of care and patient safety
- Improved patient experience
- Elevating nursing input and communication
- Harnessing creativity & innovation
- Increasing staff engagement and retention
- Transforming hospital operations and culture

Design

- Comprehensive membership including all members of nursing team (RN, NA, HUC) and partners of nursing (Quality Improvement Advisors, Care Management, Employee Health, Safety & Security, Patient Experience, etc.)
 - Over 150 attendees recruited to participate
 - Application process and standard expectations for participants and leaders
- Simultaneous contributions at unit level *and* hospital-wide
- Every unit council convene on the same day
- Improved communication between shared governance groups
- Participation and support from senior leaders

Outcomes



- Improvement with RNs getting breaks most of the time or always due to focus on healthy work environment.
- Patient Experience:
 - Communication with nursing- moved from 77.2% in 2023 to 80.6% in 2024.
 - Communication about medications- moved from 54.9% in 2023 to 59.6% in 2024.

Methods

- SharePoint electronic collaboration space
- Monthly shared governance newspaper
- Electronic topic queue for productivity data
- Key improvement indicators identified for each council
- Monthly governance meeting for report out and guidance to hospital leaders
- Guiding Principles & Orientation to program
- Comprehensive charter with work standard for co-leads

Professional Practice	• Whenever possible, wrap topics/discussions into Care/Unit Council meeting so we gain nursing input.
Strategic Goals	• Align Projects/Initiatives at Care and Unit Councils with Methodist Hospital annual plans and service line priorities.
Efficient Communication	• Utilize electronic intake form on intranet to request meeting topics • Updates from Nursing Shared Governance emailed out monthly and shared at other venues such as Patient Care Council, Hospital Leadership Team and/or Medical Executive Committee
Accountable Engagement	• Participants attend 80% of meetings or more and are actively involved in discussions, brainstorming solutions, and supporting roll-out of initiatives.
Better Together	• Partners of nursing are encouraged to participate in monthly Care Council meetings • Participants utilize report outs to share improvement work and shared collaboration spaces to capture discussions and decisions.



- Nurses with specialty certification increased from 211 to 226.
- Nursing annual certification scholarships increased by 230%
- Culture of safety annual survey: *During shift changes, important patient care information is left out (N)*. Results improved by 5% due to consistent bedside safety handoff
- 5% increase in shared governance members' perception of opportunities for personal growth and development.

References

References Available Upon Request

Contact us



Melissa Fritz DNP, RN, ACNS-BC, CENP, FAONL. Vice President Patient Care Services & Chief Nursing Officer.
melissa.fritz@parknicollet.com



Elizabeth Keating, DNP, RN
Director, System Nursing Practice & Education
elizabeth.keating@parknicollet.com

Care Councils

<p>Nursing Practice & Informatics</p> <p>To develop, disseminate and facilitate implementation and integration of nursing research and evidence-based practice into clinical practice while optimizing use of the electronic medical record to document nursing care. Policy, Epic, Patient Ed</p>	<p>Professional Development & Engagement</p> <p>To advance professional nursing practice and excellence through professional development, engagement, and recognition. Inclusion, Recognition, Celebration</p>	<p>Healthy Work Environment</p> <p>To promote a healthy work environment for patients, families and staff that is diverse, equitable, inclusive, and anti-racist. DEIB, Patient Experience, Workplace Violence prevention</p>	<p>Quality of Care</p> <p>To identify and problem solve practice issues related to quality of care and implement best practices that cross communities. HAI, Medication Safety, Falls</p>
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