

The Importance of Mentoring and Coaching in Nursing

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Coaching and mentoring play a vital role in all nurses' professional development and growth. Whether you are a seasoned nurse with years of experience or a newly graduated nurse just starting your career, the benefits of coaching and mentoring are undeniable. Coaching and mentoring are two closely related practices that work together to support personal and professional growth. They are like two sides of the same coin, complementing and reinforcing each other's benefits. Coaching involves a process where a coach, who is an experienced professional, guides and empowers individuals to unlock their potential, set meaningful goals, and develop the necessary skills and strategies to achieve them. The coach acts as a catalyst, facilitating self-discovery, providing accountability, and offering support throughout the journey (Drake, 2021).

On the other hand, mentoring is a relationship in which a more experienced person, known as the mentor, shares their knowledge, expertise, and insights with a less experienced individual. Mentoring relationships often involve guidance, advice, and encouragement to help the mentee navigate their career or personal development path. When coaching and mentoring work in tandem,

their strengths, weaknesses, and areas for growth, while the mentor offers valuable guidance, perspective, and real-world experience (Drake, 2021).

The significance of mentoring and coaching for new nurses cannot be overstated. As they embark on their professional journey, these budding healthcare professionals greatly benefit from the guidance and support experienced mentors and coaches provide. In today's complex healthcare landscape, new nurses face numerous challenges transitioning from academic to clinical environments (Anwah, 2021). They need practical guidance to navigate the intricacies of patient care, develop critical thinking skills, and cultivate their professional identity.

Experienced mentors and coaches play a crucial role in fostering the growth and development of new nurses. They provide a safe and supportive space for nurses to reflect on their experiences, identify improvement areas and set personal and professional growth goals. According to Gularte-Rinaldo et al., (2023), mentoring and coaching significantly contribute to retention and job satisfaction among new nurses. By offering guidance and support, mentors and coaches help new nurses navigate the stresses and uncertainties of their early careers,

the benefits are amplified. The combination of a structured coaching process and the wisdom of a mentor can create a powerful synergy. The coach helps individuals identify

reducing feelings of isolation and burn-out (Cavanaugh et al., 2022).

In recognition of the immense value that mentoring and coaching bring to developing new nurses, many hospitals have implemented formal residency programs incorporating these practices. The residency programs are designed to provide structured support and guidance to new nurses, enabling them to navigate the complexities of their roles more effectively. Integration of mentoring and coaching into formal residency programs aligns with the principles of evidence-based research that supports the benefits of holistic care and recognizes that nurses need support beyond traditional clinical skills.

The benefits of mentoring and coaching for new nurses are multifaceted. By partnering new nurses with experienced mentors, hospitals can foster a sense of belonging and empowerment among their staff (Gularte-Rinaldo et al., 2023). Mentors can offer valuable insights, share experiences, and guide professional growth opportunities. This personalized support helps new nurses build confidence and adapt to the demands of their roles more quickly.

Furthermore, mentoring and coaching can enhance the overall quality of patient care. By equipping new nurses with the necessary skills and knowledge, mentors can contribute to better patient outcomes. They can help new nurses develop critical thinking skills, improve clinical judgment, and refine communication abilities. This investment in the professional development of new nurses will benefit both the individual nurses and the healthcare organization (Cavanaugh et al., 2022).

Experienced nurses can significantly benefit from coaching and mentoring as well. The guidance and support pro-

Some notable programs and organizations that offer nurse mentorship include:

1. American Nurses Association (ANA) www.mentorship.nursing-world.org.
2. National Mentoring Partnership <https://www.mentoring.org/>
3. Sigma Global Nursing Excellence <https://www.sigmanursing.org/>
4. Pass the Torch for Women <https://passthetorchforwomen.org/>
5. American Association for Nurse Practitioners <https://www.aanp.org/>
6. American Organization for Nursing Leadership <https://www.aonl.org/>
7. National Black Nurses Association <https://www.nbna.org/mentorship-program>

vided through coaching can help them enhance their professional skills, deepen their knowledge, and further their career growth. Coaching for experienced nurses can focus on various aspects, such as leadership development, workflow optimization, and effective communication. Through personalized coaching sessions, nurses can gain valuable insights and strategies to navigate complex healthcare environments and overcome challenges they may encounter in their roles (Gularte-Rinaldo et al., 2023).

Mentoring also plays a vital role in supporting experienced nurses. Mentors, typically seasoned professionals in the field, can offer guidance, advice, and a wealth of knowledge based on their experiences. This mentorship relationship fosters collaboration and empowers nurses to tap into their full potential. Coaching and mentoring programs can create a supportive and empowering culture that values the continuous growth and development of its experienced nursing staff. This enhances the overall quality of care the organization

provides and fosters a sense of professional fulfillment and satisfaction among its nurses.

There are several avenues to explore when finding a nurse mentor. Internally, many healthcare facilities offer formal mentorship programs that connect new nurses with experienced mentors. This allows for a personalized and tailored mentoring experience, as the mentor is familiar with the specific challenges and opportunities within the organization. Externally, numerous nursing associations and nonprofit organizations offer mentorship programs. These programs connect new nurses with mentors with expertise in their desired specialty or area of interest. By seeking out these external mentorship opportunities, new nurses can expand their network and gain insights from a diverse range of experienced professionals.

In addition to formal programs, new nurses can also take the initiative to find their mentors. While it may feel intimidating to reach out and ask for mentorship, many experienced nurses are eager to share their knowledge and support aspiring nurses. By expressing a genuine interest and willingness to learn, new nurses can build connections and find mentors who can guide them on their professional journey. ■

“When developing this manuscript, Dr. Bell, the author held a position at Bayhealth Medical Center. Dr. Bell is currently self-employed, overseeing a nurse coaching business, Vibrant Mosaic LLC. Relevant financial relationships have been mitigated.”

References online:
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