Making the case for a clinical educator in critical care

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History

A common theme nationally has occurred over recent years with regards to an ever increasing junior, less experienced workforce within critical care. Historically staff would obtain a minimum of one years post registration experience prior to working on critical care, however due to recruitment issues, nationally there is an increasing number of newly qualified nurses starting . An ever increasing junior unexperienced workforce poses significant obstacles when trying to maintain patient safety, maintain standards, increase staff retention and improve staff education.

Why ?

- GPICS identifies that all critical care units must have a dedicated clinical educator.
- NHS education budgets are being reduced by up to 45% with no signs of increasing.
- Nationally recognised "step competencies" require staff to be competent in all aspects of critical care.
- Lack of a formal outreach service within the trust, therefore wards dependant on ICU staff to fulfil role.
- Large proportion of staff who have not completed recognised critical care course.

Our Barriers

- Financial constraints.
- Limited evidence of issues within our critical care- current staff managing education well.
- Increasing vacancy rates.
- Cross bay working- 48mile commute between units.
- Recognised post as a band 7 in other units.

Our plan

- Identification of education issues which previously have not been highlighted.
- Identification during peer review that compared to other trusts within our network we have this gap.
- Bench mark against best practice and national standards to senior commissioners.
- Job role to be split between both sites. 8 bedded unit 60% time allocation, 6 bedded unit 40% allocation.
- Job to be allocated as band 6.

Conclusions & Key Points

- Successful applicant to be in post within 2 months.
- Utilising peer review to identify to commissioners the gaps in current practice.
- Identifying the challenges to cross bay working and the need for job share.
- Clinical educator to create education plan to bridge the gap of reduced education budgets and gap in those staff with recognised critical care qualification.
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