

Increasing Professional Nursing Certification: Breaking Down Barriers and Raising Up Nursing

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Saint Luke's Hospital Perspective

- Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City (SLH) recognized the importance of promoting certification.
- SLH believed that bedside RNs could eliminate barriers and create a culture of certification.



Purpose

- Certification has been shown to:
 - Impact patient outcomes
 - Contributes to RN recognition of self-worth
 - Increases professional accountability
 - Enhance productivity
 - Improve staff retention



Objectives/Purpose

1. Create culture that recognizes the importance of professional nursing certification for the RN and those they serve.
2. Identify strategies that may mitigate stated barriers to certification.
3. Design and implement approaches to diminish barriers to professional nursing certification.
4. Improve patient outcomes, through the benefits of professional certification.



Background

East 4 was selected as it is an acute medical surgical unit that had below benchmark percentage* of certified RNs.

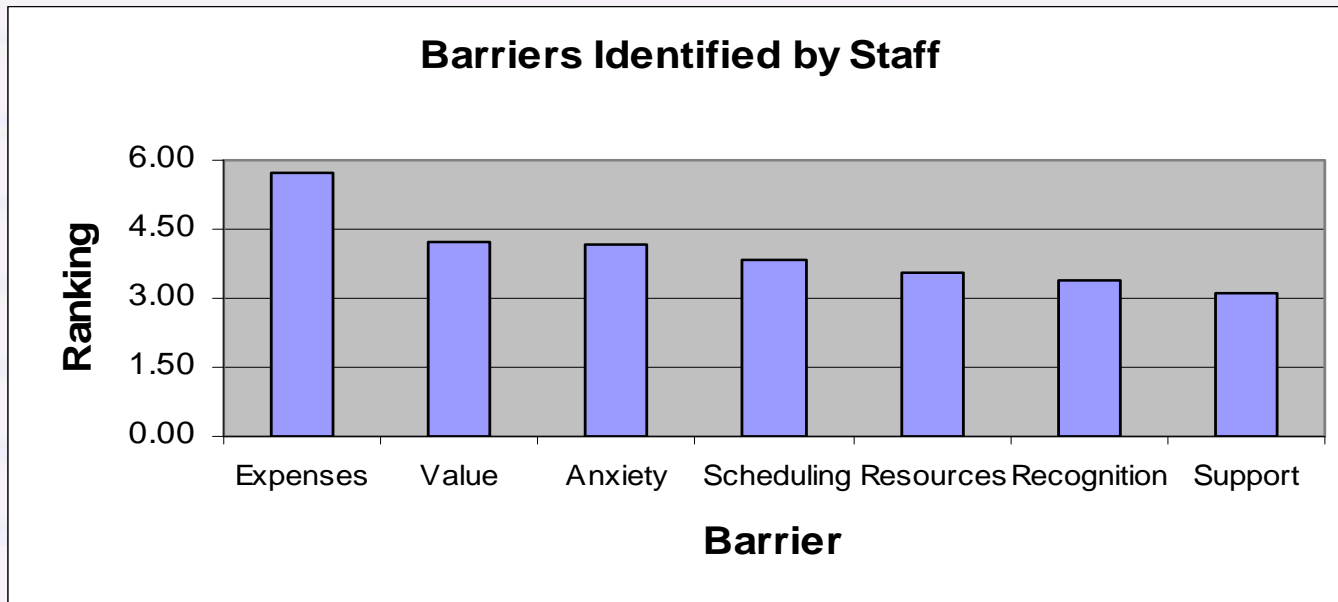
At the start of the pilot, 1 of 37 (**3%**) RNs had attained a professional certification.

*This was below the NDNQI mean for like Adult Med-Surg Combined Units, and significantly lower than the 90th Percentile for Magnet hospitals.



First Steps

- Surveyed RNs about why they were not pursuing certification
- Identified and ranked barriers
- Targeted efforts to breakdown the stated barriers



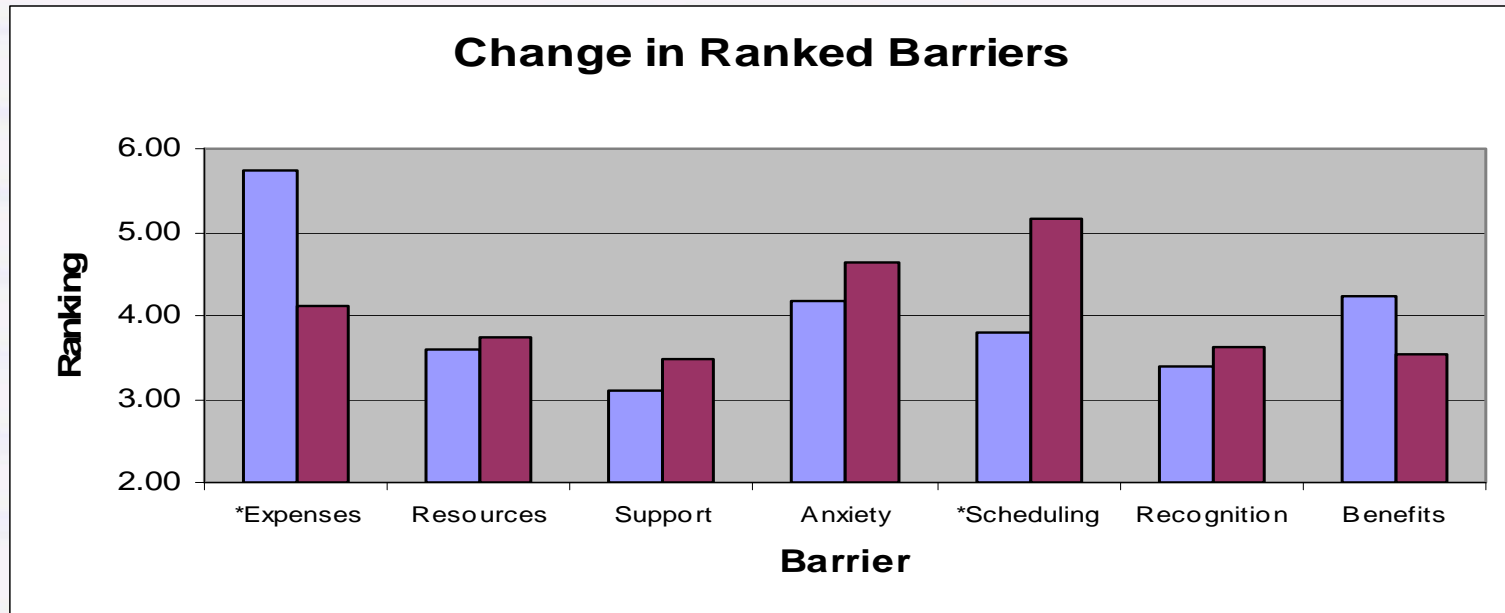
Breaking Down the Barriers

- **Expenses**
- **Lack of awareness of benefits**
- **Test anxiety/Fear of not passing**
- **Difficulty with scheduling**
- **Inadequate study/preparation resources**
- **Perceived lack of recognition**
- **Perceived lack of support**



Change

- Statistically significant change in expenses and scheduling
- Once expense was mitigated, the top barrier became scheduling



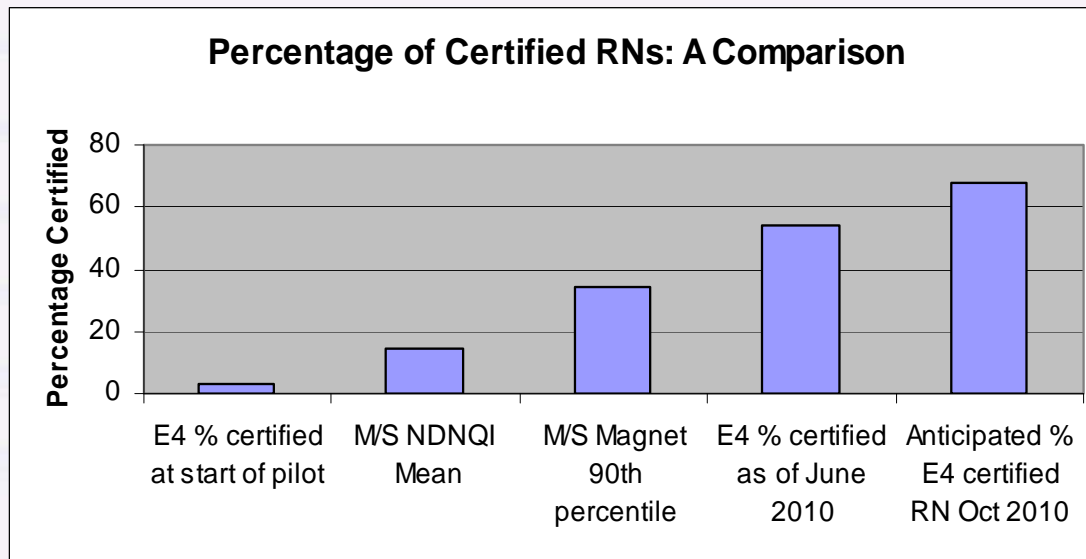
Change of Perceptions

- Value certification
- Sense of accomplishment
- Expectation of certification
- Championing certification to others
- Teaching their peers



Current Successes

- 19 nurses have attained certification
- Percentage of certified RNs increased from 3% to 54%
- 7 more staff have committed to attaining certification
- Hospital guideline changed based on success of this approach



Impact on Indicators in Literature

- Increased RN confidence
- Improved nurse/physician collaboration
- Fewer disciplinary events
- Fewer work-related injuries
- Fewer adverse events and improved patient outcome
- Higher patient satisfaction ratings



Investment in Nurses Becoming Certified: Priceless!

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