Ladder to Success
Development and Implementation of a Case Management Clinical Ladder
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BACKGROUND
- Clinical ladder programs have been integrated into hospital nursing programs for years.
- Development and expansion of the case manager role has created a need for mechanisms to increase employee satisfaction and professional development.
- While literature search shows benefits of clinical ladder programs, few encompass the unique qualities of the case management role.
- Successful clinical ladders are tools to promote leadership development and provide strategies to challenge highly motivated staff.
- James Case Management department committed to support development of a ladder program in 2012.

OBJECTIVES
1. To provide an opportunity to promote clinical excellence in case management practice.
2. To encourage evidence-based practice and research opportunities in case management.
3. To provide a recruitment tool and increase retention.
4. Create a workplace of choice for our institution and department.

LEADERSHIP DATA
- Clinical Ladder Survey - Leadership
  - Number of leadership members surveyed: 4
  - Number of responses: 3
- Question 1: Does the Clinical Ladder Program benefit the department? 100% responded: yes
- Question 2: Does the Clinical Ladder Program help with recruitment of new staff? 100% responded: yes
- Question 3: Does the impact of the Clinical Ladder Program support an ongoing financial commitment? 100% responded: yes
- Question 4: Does the Clinical Ladder Program help with staff retention? 100% responded: yes
- In what ways has the Clinical Ladder Program benefited the department?
  - "Realize increased and valued case managers"
  - "Provides opportunity for professional growth of staff and leadership for department. Provides ability to contribute to departmental goals/programs"

IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK
- Project Design
  - Formalized and application process began for staff in 2014
  - Established two levels of clinical practice: Level II and Level III. Levels differ in areas of length of employment, point totals, and project content.
  - Creation of Clinical Ladder Review Committee: comprised of leadership teams to review and score ladder applications.
  - Successful candidates awarded compensation based on a percentage of base salary and paid out as a supplemental lump sum.
- Qualitative Review
  - Program evaluation completed in 2018

PARTICIPANT DATA
- Clinical Ladder Survey - Participants
  - Number of ladder participants surveyed: 12
  - Number of responses: 11
  - Has the clinical ladder program presented a positive professional growth experience for you? [Yes: 10, No: 1]
  - Is the financial benefit of the clinical ladder program an incentive for your participation? [Yes: 9, Definitively yes: 3, Definitely not: 2]

PROJECT GROWTH
- The program has seen increased participation

CONCLUSIONS
- The clinical ladder program has helped augment a growing case management department in the following ways:
  - Staff Retention:
    - Opportunities to provide employees with financial incentives
    - Provides employee empowerment
  - Professional Development:
    - Increase expertise in the field of case management
    - Encourage evidence-based practice
  - Job Satisfaction:
    - Professional development
    - Opportunity to engage in various day to day activities
    - Personal pride in project results
    - Increased staff recognition

REFERENCES