

Sims-Giddens, S. (Ed) and Behr, M. - Analysis of Employee Surveys to Create an Effective Orientation in a Palliative Care Facility

A local non-profit hospice organization provides support for patients with terminal conditions and their families. The multidisciplinary team, who provide the palliative and quality of life care to patients during this time, often experience personal stress. To support their staff and decrease stress levels, an employee survey was created to elicit staff information about new employee orientation. Available literature on the orientation process lists many benefits to both the new employee and the organization.

Benefits to a strong and effective orientation process for the employee include reduced anxiety, increased sense of competence in a new position, and increased job satisfaction. Benefits to the organization include reduced time and expense before a new employee can function effectively in the new position and reduced employee turn-over.

Palliative care is a very different form of health care, and many new employees, especially acute care nurses, will most likely find it difficult to change from a curative mindset to a palliative care mindset. The information from the employee surveys provided valuable information to revise and strengthen the orientation program for this organization. The outcome of proper preparation and teaching about end-of-life care allows the new employee to understand and develop realistic expectations of this distinct nursing role. The organization benefits by retaining a well educated and satisfied staff. Most importantly, patients and families benefit from receiving care from a consistent and experienced staff.