Establishing a Career Ladder for Direct Care Workers

Vickie Ragsdale, MSN, RN

Director of Education Services

Buckner Retirement Services, Inc.
• Identify the benefits of a Career Ladder at an individual and organizational level

• Describe examples of challenges associated with the development of a career ladder

• Describe a career ladder program in long-term care as a case-study example
What is the Purpose?
Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies (TCNWS)

- Created during 78th Regular Legislative Session
- Serves as resource for data & research on the nursing workforce in Texas

- Purpose of LTC NSS
  To research the supply & demand of nursing staff in Texas nursing facilities

- Collect data
- Report findings
- Development policy recommendations
2008

Long Term Care Nurse Staffing Survey

Make Sure Your Voice is Heard!!

Survey Data Will be
Presented to the
Texas Governor's Office,
State Legislators, and the
Health and Human Services Commission

Complete the Survey
Let's Get Our Message Out!

For more info contact
the Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies at
ltcnss@dahs.state.tx.us
LTC Nurse Staffing Study (LTC NSS) Survey

• Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies (TCNWS) initiated its 1st LTC NSS survey

Study nurse staffing in Texas LTC facilities
• LTC NSS survey sent to 1,158 nursing facilities

• 473 nursing facilities responded

• 40.8% response rate
# Turnover and Vacancy – CNAs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Statewide Average</th>
<th>National Average</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Turnover</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNAs</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vacancy</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNAs</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>10%</td>
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LTC NSS

• Wage increases, in tune to the market. Compensation, healthcare and other incentive programs.

• Improve work place environment.

• Staff Training and Career Development. New programs: career ladder for nurse aides, nurses, other departments. Evaluate your orientation program.

• Creative strategies such as childcare, flexible scheduling.

• Empower staff to share in greater authority and decision making. Education is necessary for empowerment of staff.

• Provide staffing to match acuity.
Benefits of a Career Ladder
Programs that include upward mobility for staff through empowerment such as a career ladder has shown positive results in retention and a decrease in turnover (Barry, Brannon, & Mor, 2005)
Four attributes that Empower you in Your Work

(1) Having access to **information**.

(2) Receiving **support** from the organization.

(3) Having access to **resources** to do a good job.

(4) Having the **opportunity** to learn and grow (Laschinger, 1996; Kanter, 1977; 1993).
Win-Win

Caregiver satisfaction = Client satisfaction
Organizational Benefits
• Stability of staff

• Less turnover

• Continuity of client care

• Better outcomes for both staff and client
When the organization budgets for programs such as a career ladder, less is spent on replacing staff
Program Development
Buy-In

Include the staff early in the planning

Determine who will teach the program

Are they a “cheerleader”

Are they motivated to keep it moving along?
What Does the Staff Want?

- Focus groups

- Needs assessment-Survey
Make it Your Own

• Develop your program around the needs of your staff and clients

• If person-centeredness is an important concept in your organization then make that clear in the materials you develop
Is Your Organization’s Leadership Onboard?

• It is important that the support starts at the top

• If the support is not there the program will struggle
Include Core Competencies

• Start at the beginning

• It is important that the staff has the confidence to do a good job starting with core competencies
Reward and Title

• Monetary reward?

• Title change after completion of each level?

• Title change after the completion of the program?

• Other incentives that the staff requests?
Budget

• Budget the program

• Include everything that you will need to implement it successfully
What Will it Take?

• Staff time to teach and maintain the program

• Will staff learn on the organization’s time or their own time?

• Classroom materials/space/equipment

• Graduation ceremony

• Bonus structure
Who Should Teach It?

• Someone with a dedication to make it work!

• It is a commitment of time and you must see it through
What are the Challenges?
• Buy-in:
  – Leadership
  – Teachers/presenters
  – Students

• Costs

• Time

• Commitment
Buckner’s Career Ladder
• One year to develop

• Four levels-core competencies and 3 additional levels

• Twenty-four educational modules
The Mentor’s Role

• Have staff working one to one with the students

• Be available to answer questions or offer support as needed
Application Process

• Application

• Written recommendation from a department supervisor

• Submit a letter to the Executive Director requesting to attend the classes
Curriculum

- Body Systems: Nutrition, Hydration, Skin, & the Immune System The Nurse Aide Core Competencies
- Communicating with others: Families, Co-Workers, Healthcare Providers
- Conflict Management
- Continuous Quality Improvement
- Culture Change
- Customer Service
- Effective Communication Skills in Alzheimer’s & Dementia
- Effective Communication Skills With the Resident
- Emergency Care
- Empowerment
- End of Life Care
- How To Make A Poster
- How to Make a PowerPoint Presentation Team Building
- Motivating Others
- Oral Hygiene in the Elderly
- Pain Management
- Promoting Independence: Restorative Care
- Resident Centered Bathing
- Spending Time With the Resident
- Stress Busters
- The Individualized Plan of Care (the MDS & Care planning)
- Time Management
Criteria

- You are eligible to participate in this training if you are:
- A full time Certified Nursing Assistant
- Employed with Buckner for at least six months
- No more than one absence during the previous six months of employment
- No more than two tardies during the previous six months of employment
- No more than two failures to follow time clock procedures
- No performance issues
- No incident of No Call No Show
- Completed annual CNA core competency skills demonstration
- The classes will focus on advanced skills training, leadership skills, customer service, quality of care issues and a retreat to develop team building and conflict resolution skills
- A complete schedule and topics of class content will be available for your review. There are four levels of training. The first is demonstration of the core competencies for which there is no bonus structure. Each of the remaining three levels will consist of 16 hours of training.
Criteria

- Classes will be held in a designated room
- Employees will not be paid for attending the classes. These classes will lead to a designation of “Resident Care Specialist”
- and a bonus for successful completion at the end of levels II, III and IV
- Each participant who successfully completes the training will receive a $1,000.00 bonus upon completion of the class
- Each participant will learn new skills to help perform his/her job better
- Graduates will be honored at a ceremony for the graduate and their invited guest
- A professional photograph will be placed on the Resident Care Specialist Wall of Excellence
- Employees will receive a special name pin designating the advanced level of achievement
- Each participant will be assigned a mentor to assist in reaching the goal of completing this course
- In order to keep my position of “Resident Care Specialist”, I will be expected to complete two hours of continuing education and participate as an instructor in three skills areas in a six month period
• The class meets biweekly for one hour

• Test questions at the end of each session

• Homework is assigned

• *Homework always involves exploring new areas, meeting and interviewing staff, looking at their job from a new perspective
Think Out of the Book

• Be as creative as you want to be

• Online poster presentation

• Provide the resources and support
Utilize Outside Resources

• Invite outside guest to present

• Break up the rhythm and routine

• Dental hygienist for “oral hygiene”

• Grief counselor for “end of life care”
Share Your Creation

• Copyright

• Market the program
  – Brochure
  – Agencies/organizations specific to your area

• Collaboration
Share the Cost

• Teach the program for more than one organization

• Share presenters

• Share resources
  – Example: one organization provides the training space and another the educational materials
Closing

• A career ladder can be a positive program when you have a dedicated team onboard to make it successful

• The workforce of the future must include creative strategies such as a career ladder or similar programs to survive staff shortage and other workforce issues
Questions