

Retention and Recruitment Research

RPNAO identified ongoing challenges related to the limited amount of the Registered Practical Nurse (RPN) related research and the interpretation of available nursing research that supports sustainable decision making process specific to RPN. This limited knowledge continues to result in the role (utilization) of the RPN to remain largely misunderstood by peers, health care administrators and the public.

Assessment

Registered Practical Nursing Association of Ontario (RPNAO) identified that a better understanding of RPNs in Ontario was required to develop an effective strategic plan that focused on retention and recruitment of (RPNs).

The initial step in this process was to assess what information was available about RPNs in Ontario. The assessment process identified that there was information available through CIHI and the College of Nurses related to the number of RPNs practicing but limited information on the factors that enhanced/deter recruitment or those aspects that supported/threaten retention. Research data that is abundantly available, both nationally and internationally, demonstrated that significant investigation into the various career stages of the Registered Nurse has identified important retention and recruitment strategies resulting in governmental and organizational initiatives to support nurses. However, the assessment revealed that little information was specifically available about the retention and recruitment factors that impact the Registered Practical Nurse and this results in limited data available to support evidence informed strategies.

Plan

As the professional voice of RPNS in Ontario and with RPNs representing a significant proportion of Ontario's healthcare's workforce, it was essential that RPNAO develop a strategic plan that not only supported its 5,000 current members but the professional needs of all RPNs in Ontario

RPNAO has committed to undertake the first major study specifically focusing on RPNs in Ontario. A partnership with Juice Inc was established to support the RPNAO 2010 study process. Juice Inc. is an innovative and forward thinking organizational development group with the scientific resources available to support research.

Implementation

The study will be comprised of a survey followed by focus groups to gain a stronger understanding of issues and to provide clarity of the key survey findings. Ethical principles, appropriate rigor and an independent analysis by Juice Inc. will be conducted to prevent bias in our efforts to ensure we have quality data. The survey has been offered to all RPNs in Ontario and to a sample of key stakeholders in Ontario (Nursing Leaders from various healthcare sectors and student members). See table for study timelines.

Study Timelines

SUBJECT	PROCESS	STATUS
Investigation of Existing Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literature Review 	March 2010 Complete
Strategic Planning	Board/ Staff/Juice	April 7 2010 Complete
Study		April-\October In Progress
Determine research parameters and method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determining number of RPNs in Ontario Access to RPNs- College of Nurses database Developing survey criteria; sample size, demographic data, key areas of focus, delivery method, timelines, test process, ethical review process 	Complete
Developing research questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All questions developed in collaboration and final survey vetted through RPNAO 	Complete
Launch Phase 1 of Survey to RPNs and Key stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RPNAO to complete email test Juice Inc. to launch survey 	Tests complete Launch date: June 7, 2010 Complete
Evaluate Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All data to be submitted directly to Juice Inc. Data analysis completed by Juice 	July 2010 Complete
Review with RPNAO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Juice to review outcomes of Phase 1 of survey Formulation of focus group questions to be developed based on issues identified in survey 	August 2010 Complete
Launch Phase 2 of Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All RPNs without email addresses will be contacted by mail with e-survey access information 	August 30, 2010 In Progress
Review with RPNAO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Juice to review outcomes of survey Additional questions required based on issues identified in survey 	September 2010
Focus Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Juice Inc to conduct focus groups 	October 2010
Review Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Juice to review outcomes of survey Formulation of retention strategies to be developed based on issues identified in survey 	November 2010
Final Review with RPNAO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of specific strategies for RPNAO retention and recruitment Dissemination of information with key stakeholders 	Fall/Winter 2010

Evaluation/Outcomes

This data, once research has been completed, will be available to all healthcare stakeholders to support retention and recruitment efforts. However most important to RPNAO is that the research will more effectively direct our commitment to Ontario's RPNs as this data will provide the underpinning in the formulation of RPNAO's retention and recruitment strategies.

As RPNAO moves forward into the 2010-2011 year, we believe that our statement *RPNs contribute to appropriate care, positive outcomes and value in the transformation of healthcare* needs stronger evidence, in addition to our research a key research focus will include a comprehensive review of current nursing research to examine the context and relativity to RPNs.