

MAXIMISING THE POTENTIAL OF UNQUALIFIED STAFF WITHIN THE RENAL SETTING

N Finch
Royal Preston Hospital

PROBLEM:- Recruitment and retention of nurses has been a major obstacle to the planning of renal services both within the haemodialysis unit and the renal ward.

PURPOSE:- By identifying this problem within our center we were prompted to professionally develop our unqualified staff through in-house training linking theory to practice. Our challenge was to facilitate innovation to benefit patient care.

DESIGN:- Initially all unqualified staff complete an introduction package to provide increased knowledge and skill. On completion of this package all unqualified staff complete their level 2 vocational training then move on to level 3 the aim of which is to provide a good under-pinning knowledge, assessment of current practice and promote professional development. Methodology of assessment is observational and written. On completion of the NVQ level 3 programme candidates are given the opportunity to undertake the licensed nurse programme. To support the candidates, monthly structured teaching sessions are held and all candidates must attend regular clinical supervision sessions.

FINDINGS:- The structured education package has helped unqualified staff develop their confidence and their skills when caring for renal patients. Through providing an environment that is conducive to learning, both communication and staff morale has improved demonstrating our commitment to continued professional development.

Conclusion:- Evaluation of the development package demonstrates that retention of unqualified staff has improved and feed back from candidates has been positive.

RELEVANCE:- Recruitment and retention continues to be a major problem within renal nursing. The implementation of this package demonstrates that in order to maintain standards and deliver high quality patient care all unqualified staff require training and development.