

Professional Nursing Governance – Revisions That Empower Nurses

Rochelle M. Tinman, MSN, RN

Melissa Rouse, PhD, APRN, CNS-BC, NEA-BC, CPHQ



Northeast Georgia Health System

Purpose

A four-hospital system embarked on a refresh of the shared governance structure to ensure that nursing had a voice. Shared governance is critical to employee engagement, patient experience, and quality outcomes. When a nursing shared governance model is implemented correctly it shifts accountability, autonomy, and authority to the nurses. Strong leadership support and transparency are critical.

Background

Shared Governance had been in place in this organization for many years but due to changes in leadership as well as COVID-19, many of the processes had deteriorated. There was a noted lack of nursing engagement, trust, and transparency within the organization.

Methods

Six focus groups were held with current and former governance members, leaders, and educators. They shared feeling disconnected and excluded from decisions.

Recommendations that came from the focus groups were:

- 1) Create a less intimidating environment
- 2) Give RNs a voice
- 3) Streamline the processes/workflows
- 4) Allow RNs to choose a sub-council they are passionate about
- 5) Include more night shift RNs
- 6) Increase unit practice council support

Results

In order to address the recommendations, the following changes were made:

- Name changed to Professional Nursing Governance Council (PNGC)
- New bylaws, logo, and slogan
- Increased Transparency; Chief Nurse Executive has standing “what’s on your mind” session at each meeting
- Council rigidity and strict processes altered to be more engaging, inclusive and interactive
- Two new sub-councils added to empower RNs
- PNGC members assigned to sub council of their choosing
- Authority for voting on agenda items moved to sub-councils
- Assigned seating rotated quarterly to increase networking

Practice Implications

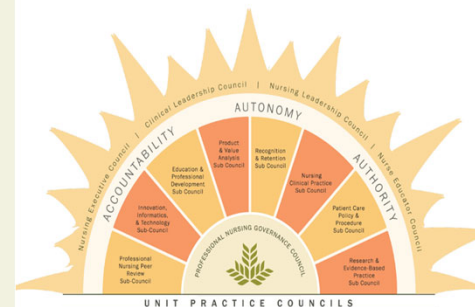
PNG is a journey and requires constant commitment from staff and leaders to ensure success. Empowering staff has allowed them to speak up and own their practice. The outcomes and decisions from the sub-councils reflect improved engagement and commitment to quality patient care.

References

- Baron, K., Parkosewich, J.A. & Hahn, J. M. (2021) Keeping nurses engaged in nursing professional governance during the Covid-19 pandemic: nursing professional governance structure at yale new haven hospital. *Nurse Leader*, 4, 194-197.
- Belfa, A. & Farr, A. (2019). Unit practice council champions support clinical nurses to improve outcomes. *Nursing Management*, 4, 17-18.
- Coleen Wilson, R. & Galuska, L. (2020). Professional governance implementation: Successes, failures and lessons learned. *Nurse Leader*, 10, 467-470
- Hancock, B. & Meadows, M. T. (2020). The nurse manager and professional governance: catalyst for leadership development. *Nurse Leader*, 6, 265-268
- Hess, R. G., Weaver, S. H., & Speroni, K. G. (2020). Shared governance during a pandemic. *Nurse Leader*, 10, 497-499.
- McClarigan, L., Mader, D., & Skiff, C. (2019). Engaging and empowering nurses through shared governance in a rural health care setting. *Nurse Leader*, 2, 65-70.
- Porter-O’Grady, T., & Clavelle, J. T. (2020). The structural framework for nursing professional governance: foundation for empowerment. *Nurse Leader*, 4, 181-189.



PNGC Sun Logo



NGMC Professional Nursing Governance – Lighting the Path for Change