

Professional Development Framework

Implementation Team Chronicles



Day 1: June 27, 2005 Full day session

Today a microcosm of all nurses at UM Health System became a new "Nursing Professional Development Framework Implementation Team", committing themselves with energy and passion to the massive yet fast-track planning for all it will take to have a brand-new system for professional growth and opportunity ready for use on July 1, 2006. Beginning then, staff in the categories now known as Clinical Nurse I, II, and bedside (non-role-specific) III's will be supported as they take initiative to consider and demonstrate their own depth of professional practice and move toward further professional growth and opportunity.

To be representative of some 3,000 nursing professionals at UMHS, a diverse mix of RN's comprise the 41-member Implementation Team, which includes staff & managers of inpatient/ Ambulatory Care; widely varying work settings; full-time & part-time; all shift assignments & classifications; experienced & relatively new. (View [members](#)).

While other nursing organizations have clinical ladders, only ours has conceived so broadly of a system that describes the professional practice of nursing along a continuum of developmental depth, relevant to virtually all RN's in any setting, to be used here at UMHS for the broad purposes of abundant opportunity, career growth, retention, and pay-and all in a collectively-bargained setting.

Developed initially in Fall '03 by its own lead team, discussed in depth and extensively refined within contract negotiations, and ultimately ratified by the nursing community in August, '04, the Professional Development Framework will provide the basis of a system now to be created that will allow a nurse--no matter what type or where the practice--to see more clearly one's own level of practice and to place it within in the broad context of comprehensive developmental levels of professional practice, from brand-new to experienced expert. As a mutual frame of reference for the UMHS nursing community, the Framework and its accompanying systematic processes, to be developed by the current Implementation Team, will allow nurses here a vantage point from which to take initiatives to deepen their own level of professional practice, and in so doing, continue their own professional growth. The Professional Development Framework system will give evidence that career growth--with abundant professional opportunities including pay linked to professionalism--is possible right here within UMHS.

The Framework and the current work to create a system for implementation represents progress extending from the contractual agreement in 2001 to jointly develop a Professional Development Framework and the UMHS Nursing Vision, which was the culmination of a milestone Nursing Whole-Scale Change event in May 2002.

In order to maximize the contribution of every diverse voice, and thus, mirror UMHS Nursing at large, the same successful Whole-Scale Change process is the choice now for how to proceed. Orchestrated to move in and out, from entire group to concurrent subgroups and back in a purposeful yet flexible way, this trademarked approach is time-tested to yield high-quality results. The process relies on members' wisdom and degree of openness, which over time will coalesce into Team outcomes whose substance is not yet known, but which will be predictably reliable.

Led by a core manager/staff team and professionally facilitated, the Implementation Team fully fulfilled its initial-day challenges. Building relationships as a foundation for work, members heard from one another at large when each revealed both hopes and concerns for this process and the outcomes. Team members grappled with the elusive understanding that "the work evolves from us." By the end of the day, members examined in depth and questioned their charge; deliberated and revised "Guiding Principles"; reviewed and clarified the work of the previous lead team--the Nursing Professional Development Framework to date; and applied for subgroups on multiple planning topics that include coaching and mentoring; how RN applicants will apply for movement within the Framework, and how they will be evaluated; resources, including technology; and the education of the nursing community; communication; and program evaluation.

Wholeheartedly committed to the planning and the outcome, the Professional Development Framework Implementation Team members also indicated their determination to communicate with the entire UMHS Nursing community as the Team spends nine days through October 31 immersed together to achieve its best.

Reported by Lynn Hamilton, MSN, RN, BC