

Professional Development Framework

Implementation Team Chronicles



Day 9 (of nine) for the Professional Development Framework Implementation Team

October 31, 2005...On your mark; get set; go! This was the final planning day prior to public introduction of the plans to date for the implementation of the Professional Development Framework. In nine days over a period of four months, a microcosm of UMHS Nursing--the Implementation Team—has been building on a body of previous work. That work stemmed from the vision of multiple staff and managers who, early in the bargaining process for the current contract, created a new goal for professional nursing practice here—a Framework that would allow the career advancement for everyone who chooses to take the initiative, and whose depth of professional practice merits it. It took the care and thoughtful consideration of many to successfully negotiate this Framework over many months in the period prior to ratification within the current contract. Addendum D of the contract spells out the professional practice behaviors in a way that shows more qualitative depth than the current nursing classification system. Now the 41-person Implementation Team has taken the next step--to lay out the initial plans for how UMHS Nursing will make the Framework come alive here over the next year—plans to unfold both before and after official July 2, 2006 start date for the new system. Those plans will be unveiled within the next two weeks.

On Day 9 of the Team's work, all details were reviewed, with special consideration to any outstanding issues not yet previously finalized. The requirements for two distinct advancement procedures were refined. On the one hand, there will be unit-based movement to level "C" (encompassing a majority of those initiating an advance), with staff application and involvement of the nurse manager. On the other hand, there will be the more complex process for the movement beyond level "C" (which will involve the application review of a Central Committee). It is understood that all requirements in the application for either advancement must be as clear as possible for staff, managers, and peers giving input. To that end, the Team delineated a template, for just one example, to help RN's moving to a "C" level create a necessary resume. For the advancement to levels reflecting depth of practice beyond a level "C," the composition of the Central Committee and its subset review panels (as another example) was weighed. As has been true for all its deliberations, the Implementation Team's diverse composition has helped assure that multiple perspectives were heard—in this case—around the Team's mutual interest, to do their best to ensure that every RN application would benefit from the careful and fair judgment of a considered representation of professional colleagues.

What the UMHS Nursing Community can expect on November 14 is multiple opportunities to engage with the Team and to hear and see these initial plans to date. The Team hopes that as many nurses as possible will avail themselves of this chance to hear for the first time the overall perspective, including who is currently part of Framework and who is not (and the interests of everyone in support of an "abundance model"); advancement processes and requirements depending on the level; terms used, and what they mean; timeframes; and the multiple resources that will become available over the next six months. The Team wants to engage and to open a dialogue, knowing that the UMHS Nursing Community has input to offer, that plans are open to influence, and that the Nursing community itself must mirror some of the Team's thoughtful deliberations in order that everyone come to terms. The sense of a monumental and unprecedented undertaking that this massive culture change will mean now leaves the Team both awed and excited for the future.

Reported by Lynn Hamilton, MSN, RN, BC