

A Place to Grow

Carolina Dogwood Chapter

Objectives

- 1) Increase interest in the Chapter and recruit new members.
- 2) Help nurses expand their knowledge and achieve new skills.
- 3) Use the staff's contacts for Chapter educational presentations.
- 4) Improve organization and communication skills.

Background on Chapter

Located in Fayetteville, North Carolina. The Carolina Dogwood Chapter was established in October of 1992. Membership was 15 to 18, but very few nurses attended the meetings. When the critical care school was operating, membership was greater than 20. Membership has fallen since closing of the school, but membership never been less than 10. Membership last year was 22. Membership at the beginning of March is 14.

Our Insight

Powered by Insight is the theme chosen by Mary Fran Tracy, the president of the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses. Our Chapter leaders adapted this theme by intentionally seeking out new insights into recruiting new members into our Chapter and to discover how we could get our colleagues to see our Chapter in a new way.

As of July 1, 2006 the North Carolina Board of Education now requires continuing competence requirements for licensee renewal or reinstatement. By July 1, 2008, at the time of license renewal each RN must complete their chosen learning activity and be prepared to provide evidence to the Board, if requested. The minimum education requirement is fifteen (15) contact hours; completion of a Board approved refresher course, or completion of a minimum of two (2) semester hours of post-licensure academic education related to nursing practice.

Nurses are looking at the Carolina Dogwood Chapter to fulfill this new education requirement but there are other reasons why nurses should look more closely at this Chapter. The Chapter is a great way to distribute healthcare information to clinical nurses on important discoveries, latest research, newest equipment, and

association guidelines. Nurses who attend Chapter presentations will bring the handout and new ideas back to their clinical area and communicate that new information to their colleagues. The Chapter provides an economic education presentation in a convenient location.

The Carolina Dogwood Chapter is using the increased interest in the Chapter to help nurses expand their knowledge, hone their organizational skills, and use their contacts effectively. This makes the Carolina Dogwood Chapter a place where their nurses can grow.

How We Make the Carolina Dogwood Chapter “A Place to Grow”

Involve the nursing staff in the Chapter education program:

Chapter members survey colleagues for advice on topics of interest and possible speakers.

Encouraging the nursing staff to use the rapport that they have developed with the physicians to recruit speakers for Chapter presentations.

Recruit nursing staff who has developed a contact with a company representative to become a sponsor of an education program by paying for the food that is provided.

Encourage attendance at Chapter meetings:

Schedule the education presentation on a day and at a time that the nurses are more likely to attend. Our Chapter discovered that Thursday night is the best night to schedule our presentations whereas Wednesday night is considered “church night” and is not a good time to schedule a presentation.

Allow time at beginning of the Chapter meeting for nurses to arrive and socialize with each other.

Combine the Chapter meetings with an education program in order to encourage attendance at the Chapter meeting.

Provide free contact hour credits to all attendees at our Chapter meetings.

Recruit a nurse that works the shift before a presentation to encourage the staff to come with her and attend the presentation.

Choose a topic that the nurses have expressed an interest in.

Choose a speaker you know that the nurses will enjoy.

Provide something to eat and drink at every Chapter meeting for those who just got off of work.

Promote Chapter Meetings:

Our Chapter believes that talking one on one is the best way to get information from nurses or distribute information to nurses but there are other methods we use.

Collect email addresses from any nurse who is interested in attending the educational programs. Ideally, email everyone on the chapter email list two weeks in advance of any upcoming educational presentation.

Distribute flyers at the staff meeting.

Display educational flyer in a place where staff will see it. Beside the time clock is always a prime location.

Distribute Chapter flyer to the teacher of new graduates, for us that is the Critical Care Teacher, so that she can encourage the students to attend the education presentation.

Talk to an educator who mentors College students to arrange for their attendance at an education presentation.

Use a flyer promoting AACN and the Chapter. We insert our promotional flyer inside the Member-Get-a-Member brochures.

Place display units in the Intensive Care Units to hold promotional literature and registration brochures.

Use AACN promotional pens to attract nurses to the displays.

Create a Chapter website. Our Chapter website is <http://www.chartingandassessment.com/dogwood.htm>

Maintain a Chapter website that contains the following information:

Chapter meeting and presentation information.

Contact information.

List of the board members.

PDF format promotional flyer of the Chapter and AACN.

PDF format applications form for the chapter.

A link to AACN application page.

Free education credit programs to attract nurses to the website.

Our Success

The Carolina Dogwood Chapter has a total of 14 members as of the beginning of March. The average number of nurses that attend our educational presentations is 10 to 20. The number of active members is 4. So, as you can see our Chapter is not large. But, if you put our ideas to work you will also experience a renewed interest in your Chapter, you will recruit new Chapter members, their will be an increased turnout at Chapter meetings, you will expand your nurses knowledge and help them achieve new skills, and new members will take the initiative in Chapter projects and presentations, just like our Chapter experienced.

This is how we manage to make the Carolina Dogwood Chapter a place to grow and if we can do it, you can do it too!

Chapter website:

<http://www.chartingandassessment.com/grow.htm>

We can help your Chapter become a place to grow. An editable form of the promotional flyer and a sample poster that we use is available on our website for you to download and adapt for use in your own Chapter. We also, encourage you to use our ideas about involving nurses in educational presentations, encouraging attendance and promoting Chapter meetings.

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