

AACN CSI Academy Sparks Support for Staff Nurses as Leaders

The program elevates bedside nurses as agents of change and drivers of excellence in their hospitals.

To date, more than 160 nurses at 42 hospitals completed AACN Clinical Scene Investigator (CSI) Academy, a 16-month leadership and innovation training program for staff nurses. The substantial improvements in clinical outcomes — coupled with nearly \$29 million in projected savings for participating hospitals — make one thing clear: Nurses are key variables in the quality improvement equation.

AACN CSI Academy nurses create initiatives focused on clinical challenges as diverse as early progressive mobility, hospital-acquired infections, pressure ulcers, delirium, falls and patient handoffs. Improvement projects from the first six regional cohorts on average have decreased:

- ICU and progressive care unit lengths of stay 1.0 day
- Mechanical ventilation 14 percent or approximately 1.0 day
- Hospital-acquired infections and ICU complications 50 percent
- Patient falls 50 percent
- Pressure ulcers 40 percent
- Catheter-associated urinary tract infections 70 percent
- Confusion Assessment Method for the ICU positive scores 14 percent

These results are significant. But the program's influence on nursing practice may be even more compelling by elevating bedside nurses as agents of change and drivers of excellence in their hospitals.

Chief nursing officers (CNOs) confirmed this during an AACN CSI Innovation Conference in New York. Tom Smith, CNO and senior vice president, Maimonides Medical Center, Brooklyn, New York, says, "CSI Academy is one element in creating environments of extraordinary excellence and moving toward tipping points not only in our organizations but also in our profession. It's a way to organize frontline expertise of clinical nurses to lead this change and get visibility for it."

Karen Cox, executive vice president and co-chief operating officer, Children's Mercy Hospital, Kansas City, Missouri, and a founder of the AACN CSI Academy pilot program, notes that demonstrating the financial impact of clinical outcomes helps change the perception of the work of staff nurses.

AACN
CSI Academy™
Clinical Scene Investigator



"It's probably the first time many nurses at the bedside have felt this degree of confidence from their leadership that they're worth investing in," she says.

Tim Quigley, vice president of nursing services and CNO, South Shore Hospital, South Weymouth, Massachusetts, agrees: "Nurses are increasingly seen as the shapers, owners and drivers of hospital culture. They are leaders of culture change."

Linda Everett, executive vice president and chief nurse executive, Indiana University Health, Indianapolis, adds, "Hospitals need to understand that nursing is a strategic imperative and not just an operational necessity. That, to me, is the cornerstone of how you bring the organization along to support these types of patient-care innovations."

Find results for all projects plus practice-based solutions to common clinical challenges in the AACN CSI Academy Innovation Database (www.aacn.org/csiprojects).

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