Guide to Nurse LEAD
for Directors of Nursing, Staff Developers and Administrators
of Nurse LEAD participants

Nurse Leadership Enrichment and Development (LEAD) is a training program to help nurses who act as charge nurses and team leaders in nursing homes become more effective coaches, leaders and supervisors of frontline staff. Nurses play a critical role in nursing homes by motivating and teaching thereby improving the performance of certified nursing assistants (CNAs) who deliver the great bulk of hands on care to residents. Past research has demonstrated that most long-term care nurses are poorly prepared to assume supervisory and leadership responsibilities (Institute for the Future of Aging Services, 2006). It is little wonder that many are uncomfortable taking on these roles.

The Nurse LEAD online training curriculum was developed from: (1) literature on nurse leadership and supervision in long-term care 2) literature on adult learning; (2) experience with nursing assistants and nurses in nursing home settings; and (3) a pilot test of the Nurse LEAD program (funded by the California Healthcare Foundation). The program consists of seven modules, summarized below:

1. *Introduction to Leadership*
   An overview of the importance of nursing leadership and the components of effective leadership Focuses on the application of leadership for delivering high quality nursing home care.
2. *Critical Thinking*
   An overview of the need for critical thinking skills in long term care and a discussion of how critical thinking can be used to enhance the quality of care and quality of work life in long term care. The chapter includes discussions of how to:
     - identify clinical problems
     - identify and use multiple sources of information and perspectives in reaching solutions to clinical problem
     - evaluate the credibility and sufficiency of information
     - formulate solutions while anticipating and assessing the likely consequences
3. *Coaching CNAs*
   An overview of coaching and supervisory skills and a discussion of how they can be used effectively by nurses. This includes:
     - being self aware and understanding what others need
     - effectively communicating with other staff
     - identifying and capitalizing on teaching opportunities
     - ability to identify and eliminate CNA's barriers to working their best
     - handling conflict and focusing on what is done well
     - insuring follow-up and follow through
     - understanding how to encourage/initiate discussions with staff while maintaining confidentiality and applying information and insights

4. *Conflict Resolution*
An overview of conflict resolution techniques and a discussion of how to help other staff resolve conflicts. This includes:
  - recognizing and responding to conflict
  - using conflict to bring about respectful and open discussions
  - using effective negotiation principles

5. *Communication*
An overview of effective communication practices and strategies for teaching other staff how to communicate effectively. This includes:
  - defining the goal of communication
  - communicating in a way that builds relationships and trust
  - providing positive and corrective feedback to others
  - understanding and teaching how and when to share information
  - being clear
  - setting the tone for a positive work environment, e.g., praising in public, correcting in private, not being reactive

6. *Diversity Among Staff in the Workplace*
An overview of how people differ, how the work environment can be enriched by differences and how to be understanding and respectful of differences. This includes:
  - identifying barriers to coaching, disciplining, feedback resulting from age, culture and experience differences among staff
  - addressing/confronting conflicts rising from cultural, age and experience differences
  - honoring differences and learning from them

7. *Working with Management*
An overview of how nurses can gain support from and work more effectively with Managers. This includes:
  - enhance ability to identify what management support would be helpful
  - develop strategies to collaborate with management
  - develop strategies to problem solve with management
  - learn how to be clear about what nurses need and how managers can be most helpful

While nurses learn the skills to become effective leaders, you and the rest of the management team will need to be supportive. Research shows training programs are much more likely to be effective when there is clear and deliberate support from management. Chris Shanley talks about the power of "Extending the role of nurses in staff development by combining an organizational change perspective with an individual learner perspective:"

> *"Having the most sophisticated and learner-centered staff development program will have little effect if the learner has to return to a workplace where*
> - *Managers, supervisors, and peers do not support implementation of the new learning;*
> - *Existing systems, procedures, and protocols are opposed to or are inconsistent with the new learning;*
> - *Work practices inconsistent with the new learning are actively encouraged because "they have always been done that way" or are seen to save time;*

- *There is insufficient time and other resources (e.g. equipment allocated to implementing the new learning);*
- *The learner is given no feedback or is not required to introduce the new learning;*
- *Or there is underlying conflict or lack of direction and cohesion within the organization."*(Shanley, 2004)

Supervisors play a pivotal role in "ensuring full application of new skills and knowledge in the workplace." (Broad, 1997)   Broad suggests that support of the organization's management is imperative for training to be converted into actual practice by staff:

> *"In recent years, explorations into how organizations work have shed light on reasons why training does not automatically result in effective performance. Over a decade ago, Newstrom (1985) identified nine major barriers to transfer, as perceived by training professionals. In order of importance, these barriers are:*
> 1. *Lack of reinforcement on the job*
> 2. *Interference from the immediate work environment*
> 3. *Non-supportive organizational culture*
> 4. *Trainees' perception of impractical training programs*
> 5. *Trainees' perception of irrelevant training content*
> 6. *Trainees' discomfort with change and associated effort*
> 7. *Separation from inspiration or support of the trainer*
> 8. *Trainees' perception of poorly designed/delivered training*
> 9. *Pressure from peers to resist changes*
> *…Unfortunately, few managers recognize or act on their responsibility to remove or diminish these barriers."* (Broad, 1997)

At the Federal Aviation Administration, a training program was launched that emphasized "stakeholder involvement", which means that management was just as responsible for the transfer of training as the staff who were trained. The table below shows the roles of each level within the organization before, during, and after the training sessions:

> *…A useful means to identify transfer strategies is a matrix showing key stakeholders and three time frames: before, during, and after training. This structured integration of stakeholders into the process is a significant achievement, providing essential organizational support for full transfer and performance of skills by learners.*

Shmikler's Recommended Transfer Strategies for Technology-based Training

Stakeholders	Before	During	After
Managers and Supervisors	Coach Trainees on training purpose, objectives, implementation. Train intact work groups Build peer teams Stage "kickoff" Encourage "test drives" on new technologies	Ensure uninterrupted training Ensure technology is available works Present training over several weeks	Request application within 72 hours Encourage practice Reward success stories Monitor skill application levels Coach weak performers Negotiate performance contract with trainee

Training Designers	Build options: challenge test "playground" Use real projects Give clear, consistent information Encourage team presentations Build high trainee involvement	Provide job-related exercises Help trainees develop action plans Collect Level 1, Level 2 data	Collect Level 3 data Circulate newsletter with success stories Stage application contests for graduates
Trainees	Explore content and technology before training Discuss training purpose, goals with supervisor Plan application projects following training	Present real job issues Develop performance contract for self and supervisor Demonstrate learning Identify barriers in workplace, plan strategies	Brief supervisor, peers on training Form user group Apply learning within 72 hours Contact training designer for coaching

Although this example comes from aviation, the concept can be applied in any setting. Nurses in the Nurse LEAD program can use what they have learned about supervising CNAs if they are given a strategy by their supervisors. Having a plan that encompasses before, during, and after the training program would demonstrate two things: 1) If management develops a strategy, it shows their commitment to this change; and 2) it can serve as a reference in the future for other practice improvement efforts.

We encourage you to think about how you can support the nurses in this training program, and any time there is new learning in your facility. During Nurse LEAD, nurses will have brief homework assignment where they may be reaching out to Directors of Nursing, Staff Development Coordinators, Human Resources personnel, or administrators. Some effective strategies include: reach out to them to inquire about what they are learning and 2) strategize with them on how you can support their learning. This may require you to bring ideas to the table and solicit their ideas for how their work might best be practiced and supported.

If you find yourself saying "I will provide any needed resources, just let me know" and "I will give them time off to attend," we can tell you that will not be enough. That is, at best, passive support. Active support is required to create most changes and to sustain all change. As the table above suggests, there are key activities to support learning. Some specific suggestions for supporting your nurses in application are:

Pre-Training
➢ Develop clear expectations for how the nurses will implement new knowledge post-training. An example of a clear expectation would be, "Choose two CNAs next month to work closely on coaching and mentoring. Help identify skills needed and desired. Meet with the Director of Nursing once those skills are identified to discuss resources need and a plan of action." Or "Form a conflict resolution team that will meet weekly to work on resolving personnel issues impacting work flow in the facility." Most people want the opportunity to use the new skills they have learned and to try them out in a safe environment. By identifying expectations ahead of time, the learners will be thinking about how each training module relates to those expectations.

➢ Make sure the person has a "buddy" at work that is either going through the same training or is a good leader. It will be easier to create positive change and will

give them confidence to change things together. Make sure key leaders in the facility with decision making authority are accessible and schedule times to check in with trainees to find out what they are learning and ideas they have about trying out their new skills or making changes in the facility.

Post training
- ➢ Have one of the leadership team be a mentor and provide opportunities to practice. The mentor's job is to understand what the nurse is learning, identifying barriers to implementing new knowledge, helping to solve those challenges, and helping to develop opportunities to practice.

- ➢ Review the trainee's job description with the trainee and see if there are opportunities to make leadership a clearer expectation.

- ➢ Provide opportunities for trainees to work on quality improvement projects in a team environment.

- ➢ Identify a small resource that could be low cost, yet useful to the nurses. This might be a video, a journal, or even one extra hour per month paid to have a special meeting, such as the one suggested for the conflict resolution team. Or perhaps this means rearranging workload to provide ample time to develop coaching skills in the first few weeks post training. Eventually this should become second nature and not require extra time in the nurses' day. However, practicing the skills and reflecting on those experiences with a mentor may require extra time to focus.

More ideas for supporting change from the organizational standpoint can be found in the guide to Implementing Change in Long Term Care
http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org/files/Implementation_Manual_ChangeInLongTermCare.pdf

Thank you for supporting nurses in their pursuit of learning. We hope you find Nurse LEAD valuable to the organization.