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Sarah Hines BSN, RN

Clement Eruwayo BSN, RN

Kristen Purkey BSN, RN

Sara Kirkpatrick BSN, RN

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Team Building Activities: Increasing Staff Engagement

Sarah Hines, BSN, RN; Clement Eruwayo, BSN, RN; Kristen Purkey, BSN, RN; Sara Kirkpatrick, BSN, RN

Lehigh Valley Health Network, Allentown, Pennsylvania

SIGNIFICANCE IN THE NETWORK

- Rapid turnover of staff on units
- Need for improved teamwork between staff members
- High rate of internal transfers
- Nurses “eating their young”
 - Newer staff members feeling unwelcomed on units

EVIDENCE

- Organized social activities are essential for newcomers to adjust to unit (Bae, 2011).
- A weekend retreat including team building exercises led to a 25% increase in job satisfaction (Lambert & Steward, 2007).
- Support from fellow nurses and management is essential to create unity, and may lead to lower turnover rates (Lapointe, Bandengerhe, & Bourias, 2014).
- A conducive “work environment” is a major determinant of staff satisfaction, commitment and, retention. Regular fun events are activities that improve/enhances the work environment (Brunges and Foley-Brinza, 2014).

P.I.C.O.

- Do unit based activities promote engagement for nurse residents on floors that engage in unit based activities as compared to floors that do not engage in unit based activities?

P: Nurse Residents

I: Clinical unit based activities

C: Clinical units that do not engage in activities that promote engagement on the clinical unit.

O: Nurse residents perception of engagement on the clinical unit and relationship building

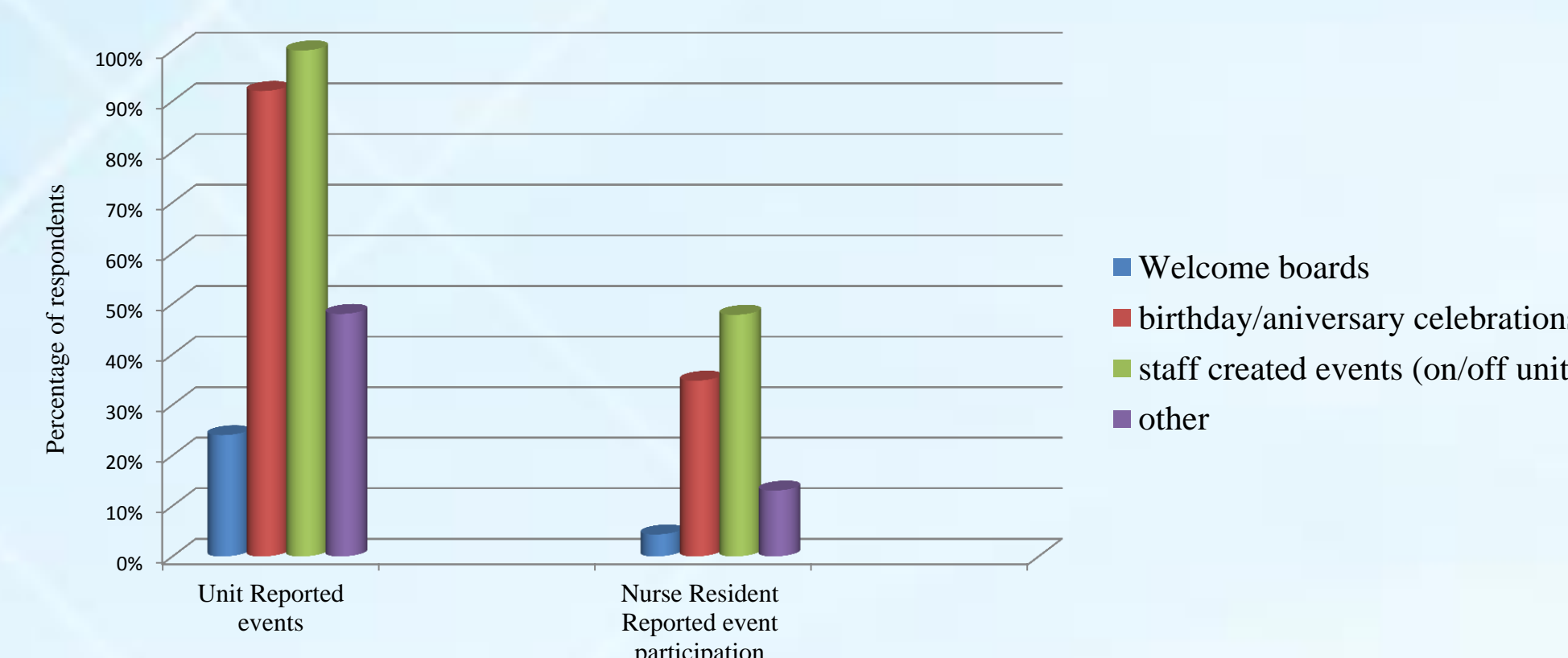
METHODS

- Two part survey
 - Part one: sent to Nurse Residents
 - Part two: sent to unit directors
- Comparing how unit directors view staff unity vs. how new nurses view staff unity
- Sample questions for nurse residents include:
 - What activities do your unit offer?
 - What is the attendance rate?
 - What do you feel would lead to greater bonding?
 - Do you plan on leaving your unit? Does lack of bonding contribute to you wanting to leave?
- Similar questions were asked of directors, including attendance rates, activities offered, and their opinion on whether the activities increase bonding.

OUTCOMES

- 25 out of 65 unit directors and 23 out of 41 nurse residents replied to the survey questions.
- 100% of Nurse Residents and unit directors surveyed reported having some form of team bonding activity held every few months as shown below.

Team Bonding Activities

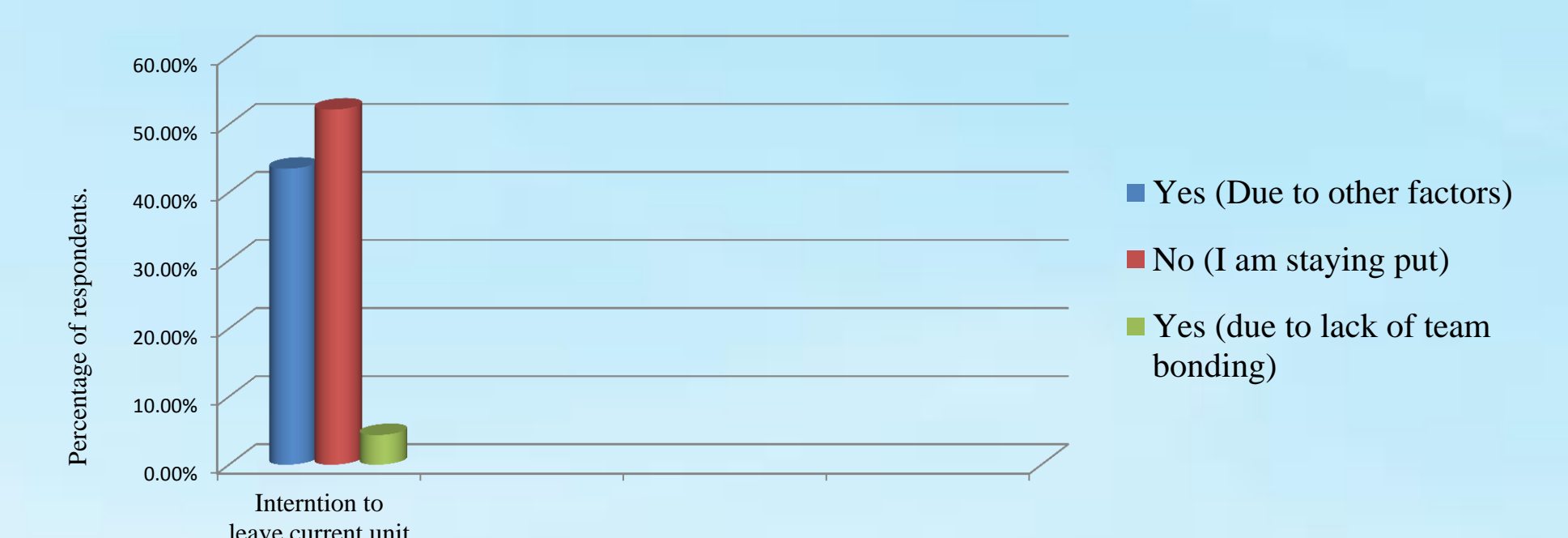


- 82% of respondents reported that team-bonding events provide stress relief in a fast paced and highly stressful healthcare environment.
- Nurse residents report that unit based activities improve team morale.

OUTCOMES (CONT.)

- For new nurse residents, the laid back atmosphere of these events serves as an added opportunity to connect and reach out to mentors to discuss current needs and difficulties faced.
- Challenges limiting units from holding such activities include:
 - current staff shortage, day/night shift scheduling, unwillingness of some staff to attend such events on their days off, acuity of patients
- 43% of Nurse residents reported that a lack of team building activities is not a central reason behind new nurse resident's decision to quit/leave their unit or the nursing profession as exemplified in the graph below.

Intention to Leave Current Unit



LESSONS LEARNED

- It is imperative that nurse managers/unit directors, the leadership team and/or preceptors, adopt structured activities aimed at welcoming new graduate nurses/new nurses to the floor e.g. introduction to the interdisciplinary team by nurse managers/preceptors.
- Organized activities outside of the hospital would be beneficial to increase staff bonding and maximize relaxation.
- Research that explores and outlines the central reasons so many nurse residents in their first year of nursing (42% in this study) want to leave their current unit is warranted.
- Creating a desirable unit culture by scheduling activities such as potluck lunches, football celebrations, summer barbecues, and holiday celebrations can produce unit cultures that maintain nurses.

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