Is It Too Late? Promoting Public Health Nursing to Enhance Building a Culture of Health

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Disclaimer

☐ No conflict of interest to report

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Outline

- Learning objectives
- Background
- Methods
- Results
- Conclusion
Learning Objectives

- Discuss barriers to public health nursing practice that are impacting building a culture of health.
- Identify strategies to promote public health nursing and increase awareness on what is public health, what is public health nursing, and what public health nurses do.
- Describe examples of nurse-led initiatives where public health nurses are improving population health outcomes.
Background

- Historical role of public health nurses (PHN): delivering population-focused, coordinated care in communities
- Evolving healthcare landscape
- Significant changes in how health services are delivered and in the role of PHNs
Background

- The longstanding PHN workforce and infrastructure is aging and diminishing
- Is anyone paying attention?
- Is it too late?
- Maybe not ... but nurses must step up
IOM Future of Nursing Report
Recommendations Pillars

Practice
Education
Leadership
Data

Diversity & Inter-Professional Collaboration
Methods

- Maryland’s Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s, PH Nurse Leader project – Enumerating and Characterizing Maryland’s PHN workforce: Impact on Population Health, Wellness, and Health Equity
- IRB approved by University of Maryland, Baltimore
- Interviews with local health department PHN leaders including school health nurse leaders
- Online survey for Maryland PHNs working in local health departments and/or public schools
Methods

- Interview & Survey content
  - Barriers to PHN practice
  - How to promote PHN
  - How PHNs can be more engaged in efforts that promote a culture of health
  - Awareness of the “Future of Nursing: Call for Action” Campaign initiatives:
    - Nurses on Boards,
    - Action Coalitions,
    - Culture of Health, and
    - Culture of Health Framework
Methods

- Interviewees provided:
  - Examples of initiatives where PHNs are building a culture of health
  - Data on PHN workforce and programs trends

- Survey participants provided:
  - Demographic information
  - Information on education, licensure and certification
  - Information on job status, level of effort
  - Salary
  - Primary and secondary practice role and work setting
Results - Summary

- Interview participation
  - 19 of the 24 local health departments
  - Two school health nurse leaders

- 535 PHNs and SHNs participated in the online survey
  - Barriers - 468 participants and 355 provided comments
  - PHN promotion - 468 participants and 362 provided comments
Results – Barriers to PHN

- Salaries and benefits
- Hiring process, recruitment, and retention
- Budget and program funding
- Lack of education, job, and career advancement opportunities
- Recognition, respect and morale
- Leadership
- Communication
- Infrastructure
- Workload / staffing
- Access and client related issues
Results – Strategies to Promote PHN

- Salary and employee benefits
- Increase awareness
- Funding and resources
- Education and training opportunities
- PHN engagement
- Policies
- Improved access and services
- Value, recognition, respect
- Advocacy and representation
- Community/stakeholder engagement
Results – Strategies to Promote Culture of Health Efforts

- Education and training opportunities
- Staffing / workload balance
- Increase awareness
- Advocacy and representation
- PHN engagement
- Policies
- Communication
- Incentives
- Collaborations, community and stakeholder engagement
Culture of Health Exemplars Focus Areas

- Community mobilization and coalition building
- Care coordination
- Integration of behavioral health programs to PHN work
- Telehealth and home visiting
- Access programs
- Academic-Practice Partnerships
Conclusion

- It is never too late ...
- Nurses are resilient and resourceful
- We must take action and speak up to promote the importance of PHN
Conclusion

- Empower PHN with knowledge and skills
- Increase PHN awareness - public, decision makers/legislators, academia, nurses and other health professions
- Advocate for and highlight the value of PHN and public health
- Address the barriers PHNs face
- Identify strategies to use PHN in the healthcare transformation
- Prepare new and existing PHNs to practice, advocate, and lead effective change
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