

Title: Growing Neonatal Advanced Practice Providers (APP) via Mentorship Can Fill the Need: Program Description and Tool Kit

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Background: The need for neonatal advanced practice providers (APP) has been described. Hospital training programs for neonatal physician assistants (PA) have been developed by physicians. Because of rapid growth and inability to hire adequate numbers of neonatal APPs, locum tenens were used at this institution for almost 20 years.

Aim: The purpose of this work was to mentor, train, and hire both new graduate neonatal nurse practitioners (NNP) and neonatal physician assistants (PA) in a program administered by neonatal APPs.

Planning/studying: We developed a two-pronged approach to attract PAs and new graduate NNPs. Marketing strategies included receptions, information, and mentorship. A 12-month neonatal PA fellowship program included clinical mentorship and weekly didactics. Case-based presentations were provided by neonatal APPs, neonatologists, and allied professionals. The new graduate NNP program included clinical mentorship and monthly meetings with peer support, lectures, and case presentations. Neonatal APP's were clinical mentors. Team-building activities supported mentorship and collaboration among all providers.

Measures: Numbers of Neo APPs hired and numbers of locum tenens required.

Outcomes: In <5 years, 10 PAs and 11 new graduate NNPs have been trained and hired, as well as experienced neonatal APPs hired. For the first time in years, locum tenens neonatal APPs are not required.

Summary: We have developed a "tool kit" of content, activities, exercises, and evaluations to support successful attainment of expected competencies. Future studies can measure retention, satisfaction, clinical outcomes. A successful training program has been implemented to meet the growing demand. We support the values of integrity, collaboration, and equity to facilitate this successful paradigm shift among all neonatal professional team-members.