

Student Name: Ronke Olomola

Student Number: 1916047

Lecturer Name: Syed Jaffery

Course Name: Problem Solving and Decision Making

Course Code: BMSW404_LON

Submission Date: 18th December 2020

Table of Content

	Page Number
Introduction	4
Complex Problem	4
Analysing the cause of the complex problem	5
The impact of the complex problem	5
Fishbone Analysis	6
A Diagram of a Fishbone Analysis used in Oak Ward	7
Not enough Equipment	7
Brunt Out Nursing Staff	8
Demoralised Staff Nurses	8
Low Medication Stock	8
Lack of Adequate Staff Training	8
Staff Shortage	9
Implementation of the alternative problem -solving technique	9
communicating the intended problem- solving technique to stakeholders	10
Evaluation of The Problem-Solving technique	10
Conclusion	11
References	12

Oak ward Nursing Staff



by Unknown Author is licensed under

Introduction

Problems occur regularly in work places, however it is not all problems that need to be addressed immediately. When a problem becomes a complex one it could lead to the downfall of an establishment. This becomes a situation in which experts are called upon to investigate reasons for the problem and how it can be resolved in the most practical way.

This report aims to discuss a complex problem that was experienced in Oak ward (Pseudo name). It will identify the problem and the proposed alternative solutions utilised in solving the complex problem. The impact and scope of the problem will also be focused upon. A fishbone analysis will be used to brainstorm. The reason for using this tool is that it shows clearly where and what the problem is. A plan to implement the problem-solving solution will also be explored as well as how the alternative solutions will be communicated to the stakeholders will be explained. The method in which the alternative solutions to solving the complex problem will be reviewed to ensure the desired outcome is achieved will also be highlighted.

A complex problem could be defined as a situation in which an issue causes concern to an establishment, that could lead to a downfall of the company or establishment if not resolved. Fischer et al (2012) explain that a problem exists when a creature is not able to achieve his intended goal. For a problem to be regarded as a complex problem, an analysis must be undertaken to see how it affects the establishment and what could potentially happen if the problem is not resolved.

The Complex Problem

Cleary-Holdforth and Leufer (2013) stipulate that medication error is a global issue when it comes to the problem of drug calculation among nurses. Oak ward management discovered that for the last three months there was an increase in the drug errors committed by the staff nurses. This caused great concern to the management and needed urgent attention. The implications of this complex problem were that patients were at risk of being administered an overdose or administered the wrong drug via the wrong route. (Clote, 2014) emphasizes 'that one third of the wrong

drugs being administered to patients happen when the drug is being given to the patient by the nursing staff.

Analysing the cause of the complex problem

Harappa (2020) explains that one can only solve a problem only after the nature of the problem is understood. When considering what was causing these drug errors, a number of reasons could have caused this such as staff shortage, incompetent nurses, poor drug calculation techniques and staff being overworked. (Morgan 2017) explains that the K – T Process of establishing a problem is a five step process which is:

1. A definition of the problem
2. Description of the problem
3. Identify the possible causes
4. Find out the most probable cause
5. Verification of the true cause

This is the process which has been used and it has allowed the actual cause of the complex problem to be identified which is **shortage of staff during night shifts**

When an investigation was carried out to find the cause of the problem, it was discovered that most of the drug errors were taking place during the night shifts. Leufer and Cleary-Holdforth (2013) argue 'that many of the drug errors can be avoided and should not occur however due to the lapses of the systems in the healthcare settings they do happen. Further investigation on Oak ward demonstrated that, the staff nurse ratio to patients was significantly lower at night compared to the day shifts.

The impact of the complex problem

An increase in staff nurses making drug errors

Staff nurses becoming demoralised due to making drug errors

An increase of incident reports being escalated to the ward manager and other higher managers.

The possibility of lawsuits if the case is serious enough due to negligence, on the part of the staff nurse also lawsuits on the hospital itself, which could be very expensive for both the staff and the hospital. National Health Service Improvement (2019) argues that 'clinical negligence claims are costly events both in terms of the harm it causes and the expense that results in it happening'

The possibility of Oak Ward being reported to the Nursing and Midwifery Pentin (2018) express that the United Kingdom Nursing Midwifery Council standards for nursing include ensuring patient's safety which includes medication administered safely and correctly by nurses.

The Care Quality Commission, in extreme cases the ward could be closed down. The Care Quality Commission (2014) have five domains of assessing health organisations which are safety, effectiveness, caring, responsive to patient's needs and well-led healthcare services. Hence Oak Ward was not able to meet up with these domains in the state it was.

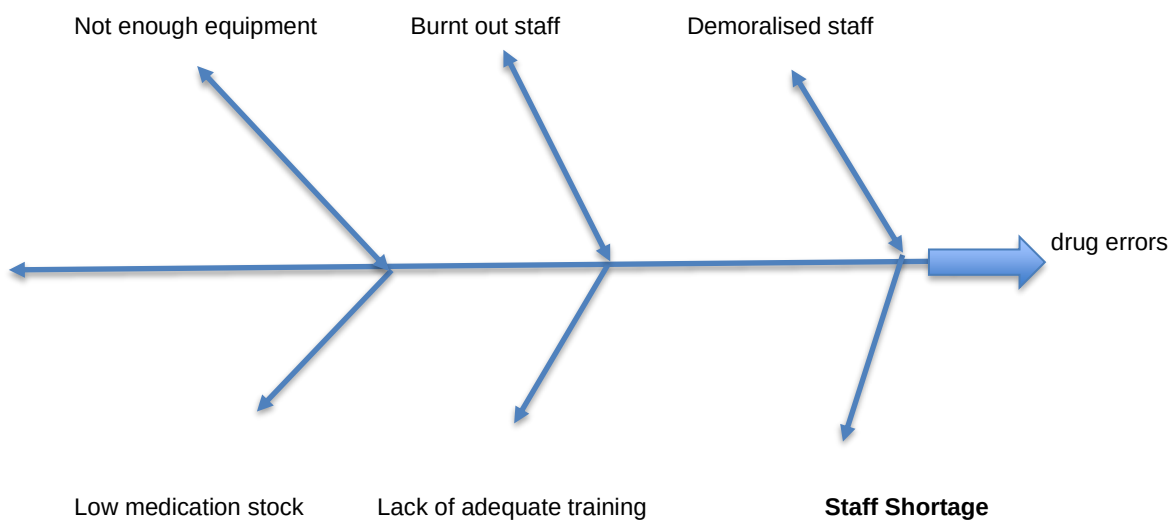
Agyekum (2013) stipulates that 'to effectively solve problems at the workplace, sorting out issues as they happen is a good way of dealing with problems, rather than waiting for things to improve or for them to work out by themselves.' It is therefore important, to take into consideration the impact of this complex problem which demonstrates that it is an issue and needs attention as soon as it is practically possible.

Fishbone Analysis

This is also known as the Ishikawa diagram it explains all the possible problems that exist in Oak Ward and from this diagram the main source of the issue can be easily be sourced and dealt with. Causes and effect of fishbone (2018) explain that the

fishbone analysis tool can be used when trying to determine why a particular problem is occurring.

A Diagram of a Fishbone Analysis used in Oak Ward



Not enough Equipment

This was one of the problems highlighted when an enquiry was undertaken to check why there were drug error issues in Oak Ward. For Nursing staff to carry out their duties efficiently and effectively they need the right equipment such as blood pressure machines and working intravenous pumps. Moyimane et al (2017) explain that medical equipment is vital for nurses in the treatment and rehabilitation of patients.

Brunt Out Nursing Staff

When staff are tired and have not had enough rest due to working long and continuous 12 hour shifts they tend not to give their best at work and there is a more likely hood of them making mistakes. Andrews (2017) explains that it is important for nurses to look after themselves she goes on to say nurse's needs don't need to be scarified for them to care for others.

Demoralised Staff Nurses

When staff are not happy it is impossible for them to be their best. The reasons for their unhappiness could be due to lack of team- work, unfriendly working environment and the mere fact that they are not praised when they make a genuine effort to work hard. Small (2018) suggest that almost half of the NHS demoralised nurses are looking to quit in a recent survey undertaken.

Low Medication Stock

It becomes difficult for staff nurses to administer medication when there is a low stock of medication on the ward. There are many cases where a drug is not given to a patient when prescribed to the patient by the doctor due to it not being available. www.fda.gov (2016) explain that it is paramount that medication is taken by patients the right route, right dose, at the right time and in the right way.

Lack of Adequate Staff Training

In order to get the best out of staff nurses, the ward must invest greatly especially for new qualified nurses. Oak Ward being a cardiac ward, a lot of the equipment used on this ward are new to the newly staff nurses and will take some time for them to get used to it and master its usage. Chaghari et al (2017) argue that in-service training of nurses is important in improving the quality of impatient care.

Staff Shortage

Management are of the notion that during the night the ward is less busy hence they tend to have less staff nurses on duty during the night shifts. This is not always the case as there are some nights where staff struggle, for example if one of the patients becomes very poorly the ward becomes very heavy and busy and it gives room for mistakes such as drug errors to occur. On Oak Ward it was stated that most of the errors that took place took place during the night shifts which is a clear indication that there was a need for an increase of staff nurses at night. Royal College of Nursing (2019) explain that patient safety is in danger due to the shortage of nursing staff in England.

Implementation of the alternative problem -solving technique

For a problem to be solved it takes a process which is clarifying the problem, establishing the causes and developing options and making choices, (Morgan, 2017). The following implementation strategies are to be put in place:

1. The need for extra experienced nursing staff to be rotated during the night shifts,
2. Two staff nurses checking all the intravenous medications before administering to patients.
3. Staff nurses are encouraged to report to the nurse in-charge when they make mistakes and not feel that they will be blamed. Also reporting near miss incidents.
4. Any staff nurse that makes a drug error will have to retake the drug calculation examination.

Communicating the intended problem- solving technique to stakeholders

Due to the Covid 19 pandemic it will not be practical to have all the stakeholders be together in a board meeting, but a zoom meeting would be more ideal. Working safely during coronavirus (2020) suggest that it is important for employers to provide clear and regular communication to improve understanding of ways of working. The stakeholders include all those individuals that have a part to play in Oak ward, these are the staff nurses, managers and the board of directors.

A presentation which has all the points that shows how the complex problem can be solved will be shown and clearly written for all stakeholders to understand and digest. The use of emails will also be used in communicating with all the stakeholders.

Evaluation of The Problem-Solving technique

It is important and crucial that any problem - solving technique put in place is monitored and evaluated to see that it is doing what it was intended for, In order for this to take place, the following steps will be evaluated by:

A check on the numbers of drug errors that have taken place three months after implementing the problem-solving technique.

A survey to be carried out among the staff nurses to find out how they feel as regards the increase of staff nurses working at night.

Patient's perspective as regards the quality of nursing care that they are receiving

Conclusion

This academic essay has attempted to discuss a complex problem that occurred in Oak Ward, which is an increase of drug errors on the ward, especially during the night shifts. The problem was identified and an impact of this problem on Oak Ward was focused upon. It was also determined that the problem was important enough for it to be addressed. The implementation of the problem-solving technique was discussed and how it will be evaluated to see if it has worked. The essay also focused upon how the stakeholders in Oak Ward will be informed about the way in which the problem will be solved.

The essay utilised the fishbone analysis in analysing the complex problem also the K – T five step process of establishing the complex problem was also discussed. This essay demonstrated that it is important that once a problem such as an increase in drug errors is observed, this is a problem that cannot be left to sort itself out but, needs to be addressed and in this case an increase in financial investments on staff nurses is required, in the form of there having to increase the number of staff nurses during the night, also the need for there to be retraining for staff nurses that making drug errors, this is all for the safety of the patients. However, the managers of Oak ward know that it will cost the ward less if the problem is solved than for it to be ignored and a serious accident occurs which involves the loss of life or a patient becomes very poorly.

References

Agyekum, F., (2013) Problem solving and decision making in the workplace for supervisors Business, Education, Technology

Andrew, H., (2017) Beating burnout What we need to know www.rcn.org.uk [Accessed 16/12/2020]

Care Quality Commission (2014) *inspection framework what does a well-led organisation look like?*

Causes and effect (fishbone) 2018 *Quality improvement improvement.nhs.uk* [Accessed on 16/12/2020]

Chaghari, M., Saffari, M., Ameryoun, A., (2017) Empowering Education: A New Model for In-service Training of Nursing Staff *Journal of Advances in Medical Education & Professionalism* www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov

Cleary-Holdforth, J., Leufer, T., (2013) Strategic role of education in the prevention of medication errors in nursing: part 2 *Nurse Education in Practice* school of nursing and human sciences Dublin city University, colins ave, Glasnevin, Dublin, Ireland

Clote, L., (2014) Reducing medication errors in nursing practice, *Cancer Nursing Practice* 14, 1, 29 – 36 doi: 10.7748/cnp.14.1.29.e1148

Fischer, A., Greiff, S., Funke, J., (2012) The process of Solving Complex Problems *Journal of problem-solving* 4 (1) 19-42 projects validity of minimal complex system complex problem solving

Harappa Diaries (2020) Effective problem-solving and decision-making at the workplace *Harappa.education*

Leufer, T., Cleary-Holdforth, J., (2013) *Let's do no harm: medication errors in nursing: part 1 Nurse Education in Practice* school of nursing and human sciences Dublin city University, colins ave, Glasnevin, Dublin, Ireland

National institute for health and care excellence (2014) *safe staffing for nursing in adult wards in acute hospitals safe staffing guidelines [SG1]* published date : 15 July 2014

National health service Improvement (2019) Clinical negligence and litigation *improvement.nhs.uk* [Accessed 16/12/2020]

Morgan, P., (2017) *The business student's guide to study and employability* Sage London

Moyimane, M. B., Matlala, S. F., Kekana, M. P., (2017) Experiences of nurses on the critical shortage of medical equipment at a rural district hospital in South Africa: a qualitative study The Pan African Medical Journal www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov [Accessed 16/12/2020]

Pentin,J., Smith, J., (2018) Safe medicine administration evidence based Nursing *blogs.bmj.com* [Accessed 16/12/2020]

Royal College of Nursing (2019) Patient safety in danger unless nurse numbers increase RCN warns www.rcn.org.uk press release 17/09/2019 [Accessed 16/12/2020]

Small, N., (2018) Almost half our demoralised nurses are looking to quit the NHS, says survey Mirror *mirror.co.uk* [Accessed 16/12/2020]

Working safely during coronavirus (COVID-19) Support for business and self-employed people during coronavirus 10 December 2020 www.gov.uk [Accessed 17/12/2020]

www.fda.gov (2016) Why you need to take your medications as prescribed or instructed 18 feb 2016 [Accessed 16/12/2020]