Conduct a Values Clarification Exercise

A values clarification exercise can be used to develop a shared vision for the ward/unit nursing team and to determine the way forward for the CNM Project.

Values answer the question of why people do what they do and guide our actions towards the things we believe are good in some way or another.

Being part of a group that shares a common core set of values creates expectations and predictability and provides the team with norms to guide their work.

**A values clarification exercise can be performed:**

- In a forum or number of forums with facilitation by someone external to the ward/unit. Prompt questions can be used to guide discussions (see below). You might approach a staff member who has completed the EOC Facilitation Development Program for assistance
- By an anonymous survey with the use of a series of specific prompt questions
- Or a combination of both methods.

*Most importantly all staff must be given the opportunity to be involved in the exercise and provide feedback on the shared values.*

Once the shared values have been determined they should be displayed where all can see them including staff, patients and visitors to the ward/unit:

- On the wall as individual sentences or words or incorporated into a mission statement
- Creatively, which in some cases might not be in the word form but in icons or images which represent the values
- Within brochures and flyers which discuss the ward/unit.

A copy of the shared values is given to all staff and included in new staff orientation programs.

The shared values must be revisited frequently and revised especially when there is a change of staff. The values can be used as a cross check when it is felt that there is divergence from the group values.
Conduct a Values Clarification Exercise continued

Conducting a values clarification exercise in a forum mode:
- Butchers’ paper or a flip chart
- “Post it notes”
  Ask participants to answer values questions on “post it notes” – one point to each note
- Schedule of group sessions convenient to the facilitator and the nursing team.

1. To start discussions visual cues postcards or magazine clippings could be used as cues.
   Participants are asked to:
   Select something that represents a value that is important to you regarding...
   And substitute one of the questions being used to guide the exercise
   eg – Your role in a nursing team?

General questions to focus on might include:
- What is my role on the ward?
- What do I value in my nursing work?
- I believe the factors that inhibit me in my nursing work are?
- I believe the factors that support me in my nursing work are?

Specific questions relating to the CNM Project might be:
- What do you think a team should look like?
- What is my role in the nursing team?
- What rules are important in regard to working in a team?
- How should conflict or divergence from the shared values be handled?

2. “Post it notes” are placed on flip chart paper under the relevant question

3. To determine shared values the group will be required to theme or group the common responses.
   Some responses may be moved to other questions, with the approval of the group

4. The group works on formulating a statement that encompasses all of the contributions of all
   team members

5. The flip chart paper should be left on display to allow others to add contributions.

References