Evaluation of a Clinical Leadership Programme for Nurse Leaders

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The purpose of this study was to evaluate the impact of the adapted Royal College of Nursing Clinical Leadership Programme on the development of leadership competencies of nurse leaders in Switzerland.

The participants in this study included 14 nurse leaders from different departments of The University Hospital Basel. Respondents completed a German-language version of the Leadership Practices Inventory (Self and Observers) at the beginning of the Clinical Leadership Program, at the end of the program and six months after the program ended. A total of 42 LPI Self were distributed, with 100 percent response rate, and 406 LPI Observers were completed (96% response rate). Internal consistency of the LPI in this study was .95 for the composite score and between .78-.86 for the leadership practice subscales. Nine of the leaders were female and seven were between 41-50 years of age. The mean length of job and management experience was 24 years and 11 years respectively.
KEY FINDINGS

The average score for each leadership practice changed over time, and self and observer scores were very close together and followed the same trend (although self scores tended to be lower than observer scores). The greatest improvement in leadership performance occurred between pre-measurement and the first post-assessment; the mean scores between the first and second post-assessment were only slightly higher, mainly in the self-assessment rather than the observer’s rating. “This finding shows that the greatest change in leadership practices happened during the leadership programme and this change was sustained over time” (p. 5). Multivariate analyses showed that the Inspiring and Challenging changes over time were statistically significant (both for Self and Observers); although Modeling (Self) and Encouraging (Self and Observer) were significant at p < .08.

The results indicate that ward leaders following the program significantly improved their leadership practices and this change was sustained over time as clearly demonstrated by the 6-month follow up data. “Although their prior knowledge, professional training and leadership experience varied considerably before they started the programme, the leaders were able to further develop their leadership practices through the course of the programme” (p 10).