ANCC Magnet Hospitals – Beneficial or Wasteful?

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What have you read or heard about ANCC Magnet Hospitals? Do you know all the pros and cons of this certification? There are studies available that show the various benefits of this certification. These benefits are improved patient care, safety, and satisfaction. Others have argued that Magnet hospitals are all “smoke and mirrors”. ANCC Magnet Hospitals have shown to be the best of the best. But non-ANCC Magnet credentialed hospitals have proved that as well. Can quality care be provided at a hospital without specific credentials? Can quality nurses be found at a hospital without the ANCC Magnet credential? It starts from the top – quality management leads to a quality work environment. This in turn leads to excellent nurses being hired that can provide excellent patient care, without all the bells and whistles.

Studies show that in hospitals that have obtained Magnet status, patient outcomes have been positive. ANCC has certain standards that the nurses of the hospital are required to meet. They provide education for these nurses to meet these standards. By holding bedside nurses accountable to provide a certain standard of care, certain studies have shown there were improvements in overall patient care. Per the ANCC, hospitals that have obtained Magnet credentialing have reported decreased cases of pressure injuries, falls, and the quality of care for patients have improved. By providing the staff, specifically nurses, with education approved by the ANCC, patient outcomes were better regarding those 3 categories of cases.

On the other side of the argument, are the cons of ANCC Magnet hospitals. These hospitals have a set list of standards, protocols, and regulations to follow. Rules and regulations are always important. All patient contact, whether it is a task to be completed or questions to be asked, are written in advance and pre-approved. When it comes to patient care, nurses have shared their feelings that it should be more personal when taking care of a person’s loved one. Nurses who have cared for patients in a Magnet hospital, have reported the questions in assessments that were a part of the standard, may or may not have even had relevance to the patient. They were forms that simply needed to be filled out. This loses the touch of rapport a nurse may build with a patient. Thus, losing the aspect of providing the best quality of care for a patient.

I personally do not see the benefits of a hospital being ANCC Magnet certified. I would suggest that nurses can be held accountable by following a list of standards of care. The standards of care would be created and provided by a designated board of reputable nurses. Nurses need the ability to hold autonomy and independence in their job. A nurse that has the independence that she has earned can provide the patient with care that is appropriate for them specifically. Nurses spend all day with their patients and at times, multiple shifts in a row. Nurses can have autonomy while still holding true to providing safe and quality care. To hold a Magnet certification for a hospital appears to only look good on paper, but quality care can still be provided without it. The ANCC Magnet certification appears to create “robots” out of nurses and the last thing a patient would want is a “robot” caring for them. Per nurse testimonials on Med Page Today, they were not happy working at an ANCC Magnet hospital. Hospitals can hire nurses that are well-educated, open to furthering their education, and exude their love of caring for others. This will show a hospital does not need a special credential to provide excellent care.

Non-ANCC Magnet hospitals have proved to be just as great as an ANCC Magnet hospital. Is it simply a fancy title that will make a hospital great? The answer is - no. If a hospital can create a healthy work environment and hire quality nurses, this can lead to improved quality of care for patients. A healthy work environment for nurses leads to a healthy healing environment for patients. Standards set by a hospital to create this do not require an ANCC Magnet credential.

References

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