



# Donor Perspectives on Supporting Nursing Excellence in a Community Hospital

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## BACKGROUND

- The IOM recommends that nurses achieve baccalaureate preparation
- There is a need for increased evidence-based practice (EBP) and research in hospitals
- Recent years have seen growing financial pressures on hospitals
- It may be financially difficult for community hospitals to achieve BSN and EBP goals
- Community hospitals may rely on philanthropic support to fund these programs
- It is not clear what motivates donors to contribute specifically to programs supporting nursing development

## PURPOSE

- The purpose of this qualitative research was to explore donors’ perspectives on support of nursing excellence in a community hospital

## METHODS

- Research was conducted in a 176-bed community hospital in the Southeast United States
- Recruitment was done via personal contact with donors facilitated by the hospital development director
- We conducted structured interviews with six individuals who had made large contributions to support nursing excellence programs
- Thematic content analysis was performed on interview transcripts
- Two researchers collaborated and reached consensus on categories and themes

## RESULTS – FOUR THEMES

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| <p><i>Theme 1: Donors want to feel they are making a difference</i></p> <p>“[The nurses] were just outstanding, people that seemed to know so much, and when I found the program that [the hospital] was trying to get the nurses here to all have a [BSN] degree by the year 2020, it made a lot of sense, and so we hope to continue to support it.”</p> <p>“It just makes common sense to me that the more education you have or the more exposure you have to all phases of medicine, the outcome of the patient is going to be better.”</p>       | <p><i>Theme 2: Helping nurses meet the challenges and complexities of 21<sup>st</sup> century care delivery systems</i></p> <p>“You have to take the funds that are out there and train the [nurses] to just become the best they can be.”</p> <p>“The medical field these days is changing so rapidly, the medicines and treatments and everything. And you know nurses really have to keep up.”</p> <p>“I think the nurse that is better educated can see symptoms quicker, can call in a doctor quicker, can keep things from deteriorating.”</p>                        |
| <p><i>Theme 3: Donors had an existing foundation of service</i></p> <p>“We have given nursing and or nursing related scholarships to schools and to other hospital foundations. At [the hospital] what we did is [the development officer] asked us if we wanted to think about nursing education. We did.”</p> <p>“We gave [a large sum of money] back in the late 90s and early 2000s. And [now] we were interested in nursing excellence. “</p> <p>“Because they asked.”</p> <p>~ donor relating why they supported nursing excellence programs</p> | <p><i>Theme 4: Valuing excellent nursing care I received</i></p> <p>“The nurses are the face of the hospital. The nurses are the ones who are going to be with you....Nurses are the point of human intersection between care and the patient.”</p> <p>“What [nurses] project in the way of competence, in the way of caring, can’t be overstated.”</p> <p>“The role [of nurses] is obviously technical but it’s also got a huge component of compassion and making the patient understand. . . . The nurses get loads of tough questions and handle them accordingly.”</p> |

## IMPLICATIONS

- Nursing and hospital administration leaders are the key interface with potential donors
- Hospital’s strategic plan as it pertains to nursing professional development should be well-publicized in local community to raise awareness of funding opportunities
- Community members’ knowledge regarding how quality of nursing care impacts patient outcomes is crucial to raising philanthropic support for nursing excellence
- Understanding donors’ personal or family experiences with nursing care may help guide development efforts to support nursing in the community hospital
- Clear explanation of need and request for support specific to nursing development is an effective method of eliciting donor support

*When you’re in a hospital...the tender loving care makes a whole lot of difference. Though more than that...expertise....So I’d say we’re very much in tune with the idea of buying additional support for nursing.*

## REFERENCES

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