**NUR-721: NURSING INFORMATICS PRACTICUM**

Selecting a Project Idea

# OVERVIEW

When reviewing the Project Idea Form with your preceptor, think about health information technology or informatics needs within the setting (acute care setting or ambulatory practice environment). Needs may have been identified through a formal assessment, organizational outcomes, safety rounds, quality improvement indicators, or the organization’s strategic plans. Another way to think of this is by thinking of projects that help the organization run, grow, and/or transform.

**Sample ”Run” Project Idea**

“Run” projects are initiatives that help keep the organization and its health information technology environment secure, current, and compliant.

Consider, for example, that safety rounds have shown gaps in the way clinical staff handle protected health information. The clinical staff need reinforcement in understanding compliance standards of HIPAA and general cybersecurity practices to protect confidential patient information. This gap is the basis for the practicum project.

An example of an informatics practicum project would be cybersecurity improvement in a healthcare setting that involves:

1. Identifying current clinical staff knowledge on HIPAA standards, cybersecurity concepts, as well as, the implications of violations related to the same.
2. Planning the delivery of a training program that covers best practices in HIPAA and cybersecurity compliance in a health setting.
3. Implementing the cybersecurity training program.
4. Measuring the training program outcomes.

**Sample ”Grow” Project Idea**

“Grow” projects are initiatives that keep up with the organization’s strategic plans toward ongoing growth and expansion.

Consider, for example, a gap in documentation in the EMR of the patient’s social determinants of health (SDOH) The impact of this lack of documentation is that patients are not being referred appropriately to resources in the community, resulting in poor health outcomes, the exacerbation of existing conditions, and limitations to the growth of the organization’s population health program.

An example of an informatics practicum project would be the improvement of EMR documentation practices that involves:

1. Assessing gaps in clinical staff knowledge about SDOH
2. Determining where in the EMR documentation workflow elements of SDOH would be captured best.
3. Working with IT and clinical staff to design the new documentation needs.
4. Implementing the new documentation changes and plan for appropriate training and communication to clinical staff.
5. Measuring the documentation revision outcomes.

**Sample ”Transform” Project Idea**

“Transform” projects are initiatives that help us change and improve the way the organization delivers safe and quality patient care and services through innovation and creative thinking.

Consider, for example, a delay in the documentation of patient’s daily weights in the EMR despite the fact that the organization has just replaced its regular beds with smart beds that can capture weight fluctuations. The impact of this delay affects the fluid intake management for patients that leads to poor clinical care.

An example of an informatics practicum project would be the integration of the bed’s smart system with the EMR so that daily weight data is automatically uploaded into the EMR. This project would involve:

1. The assessment of the technological capabilities of the smart bed.
2. Planning and development of a new workflow around the planned device integration initiative.
3. Working with IT to map the weight data to the appropriate EMR fields and testing the changes.
4. Communicating with clinical staff regarding the new device integration.
5. Measuring the device integration outcomes.