

Barton has ideas to cope with nursing job shortage

Publisher's Note: *This is an excerpt from a story about how nurses can't find jobs, with Barton Health's comments here. A link to the whole story is below.*

Job sharing was postulated as a way to get new grads into the workforce and accommodate current workers who wanted to work part time, but that idea was nixed by Dennis Yee and others.

"The learning curve is tough for new grads," Yee explained. "New grads need constant supervision as well as hands-on hours to learn skills and specialties. That means they need to be doing full-time shifts for a period of time to get them up to speed not only on policies and procedures, but also on practice."

That sentiment was echoed by Mary Bittner, MSN, RN, vice president of nursing for Barton Healthcare System in South Lake Tahoe, CA. Bittner said a sharing program might work between facilities, but not between nurses sharing the same slot.

"A new grad does need a training program to develop competency in practice so the 'investing' facility needs to have some guarantee of return on investment," she said. "The use of a consortium idea might work if the expense for new grad program training was shared by those 'sharing' the nurse afterwards."

Bittner noted facilities with seasonal increases in traffic might do well to look at sharing experienced nurses as well, but such a program would have to benefit everyone and the costs would have to be shared.

"I have long thought that it would be nice to share nurses between facilities [like ours] that experience surges in

volume," she said. "So, two or three resort communities with different business (that is, timed at opposite ends of the calendar year) could share nurses and the nurses retain much needed full-time work. The arrangement might have to be workable geographically to get the most out of the shared employee."

Read the whole story