

# Early Nurse Career Coaching to Impact Retention of Pediatric Nurses

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## Introduction

### Background, Significance

- Nurses in their first year of practice are offered organized support with nurse residency programs (NRPs) and orientations but support typically concludes at the end of the first year.
- Retention is decreased without continued guidance for early career nurses who seek to develop and pursue career goals.
- Inconsistent or lack of support leads to dissatisfaction and missed growth opportunities (Wyllie et al., 2020).
- The average cost of turnover for a bedside nurse is \$52,350. Each percentage of change in nurse turnover rate equals \$380,600 annually (Nursing Solutions, Inc., 2023).
- Increased retention has a positive impact on the nurse, organization, and patient outcomes (Buchan et al., 2018).

### Problem Statement

New nurses lack mentorship, continued education, and peer support in their first years of nursing, decreasing their successful transition into the healthcare workforce. Transition challenges can cause increased burnout and turnover, leaving a financial strain on the nursing field and healthcare systems.

### Inquiry, Purpose

**Inquiry:** In pediatric nurses with one to two years of experience, how does individual career coaching focused on professional development and mentorship, compared to no individual career coaching, affect employee engagement and retention rates during a six-month period at a large metropolitan hospital?

**Purpose:** To improve retention and engagement of early career pediatric nurses.

### Synthesis of Evidence

- PubMed & CINAHL databases: *early career, nurse, retention, coach, mentor, professional development*

EB PG	LOE I SR RCT	LOE II RCT	LOE III Quasi-Experimental	LOE IV Non-Experimental	LOE V SR Descriptive or Qualitative	LOE VI Single Descriptive or Qualitative	LOE VII Expert Opinion
0	0	2	0	3	10	14	2

## Theory, Change

**Theory:** The Stages of Transition (Duchscher, 2008)  
**Change Process Model:** Kotter and Cohen's Model of Change (Kotter & Cohen, 2012)  
**Evidence-Based Model:** Star Model of Knowledge Translation (Stevens, 2004)

## Methods

### Themes:

- Early Career Nurse (17)
- Retention (14)
- Coaching (9)
- Mentorship (19)
- Prof. Development (24)
- Engagement (12)

### IRB, Design:

- Site IRB – Quality Improvement (EBQI)
- Quasi-experimental design

### Settings, Participants, Time:

- Large metropolitan children's hospital
- Inclusion: NRP Winter & Summer 2023 Cohorts (120 total), current employees, 1-2 years of experience; convenience sampling
- Six months from September 2024 – February 2025

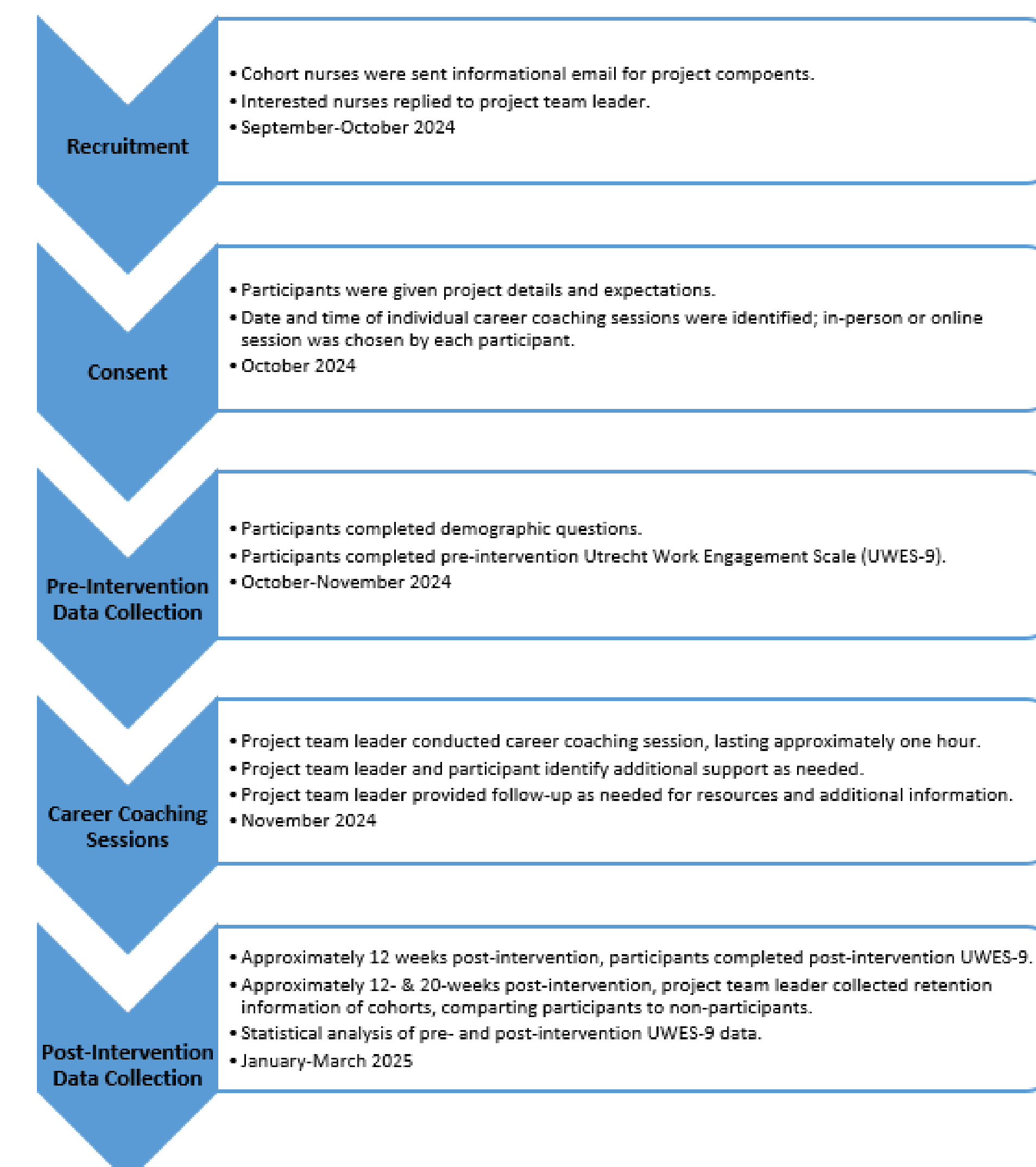
### Intervention:

- Individual career coaching sessions focused on professional development and mentorship
- One-hour sessions with in-person or online options

### Outcomes, Instruments, Analysis

Outcome Measured & Measurement Tool	Tool Validity & Reliability	Statistical Analysis Plan
Retention	n/a	Compare non-intervention group to intervention group
Engagement • Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-9)	Valid & Reliable (Schaufeli et al., 2006)	Paired t-test

### Intervention Steps Diagram



## Results

- Retention of participants was greater than retention of non-participants.
- Participant engagement mean scores improved after career coaching sessions.
- Subjective feedback of participants was very positive for impact and timeliness of career coaching sessions.

Engagement (UWES-9)					
	N	Mean UWES-9 Avg. Score	Median UWES-9 Avg. Score	Standard Deviation	Standard Error
Pre-test Engagement Scores	14	4.16	4.14	0.723	0.241
Post-test Engagement Scores	14	4.27	4.14	0.563	0.188

$t = -1.06$ ;  $df = 8.00$ ;  $p\text{-value} = 0.320$ ;  $\text{effect size} = 0.35$  (small)

Retention			
	Baseline	12 Weeks Post-Intervention	20 Weeks Post-Intervention
Retention of Participants	100%	100%	100%
Retention of Non-Participants	100%	96%	94%

Participant Characteristics (n = 14)			
Variable	Value	Variable	Value
Winter 2023 Cohort Participation	4/35 (11%)	Race	
		White	13/14 (93%)
		Black or African American	1/14 (7%)
Summer 2023 Cohort Participation	10/85 (12%)	Highest Degree	
		ADN	2/14 (14%)
		BSN	12/14 (86%)
Age (years)		Healthcare Experience	
Mean	26 years	Care Assistant	8/14 (57%)
Range	22-33	Nurse Tech	12/14 (86%)
		CNA	9/14 (64%)
Gender		Nursing Experience (months)	
Male	0/14 (0%)	Mean	17 months
Female	14/14 (100%)	Range	14-21
Ethnicity		Nursing Department Type	
Hispanic or Latino	1/14 (7%)	ICU	5/14 (36%)
Not Hispanic or Latino	13/14 (93%)	Surgical Services	1/14 (7%)
		Medical-Surgical	7/14 (50%)
		Ambulatory	1/14 (7%)

### Post-Intervention Question:

Since participating in the session, have you begun looking into and/or participated in any professional development or career growth opportunities?

**Yes 12/14 (86%); No 2/14 (14%)**

## Conclusion

### Successes:

- Career coaching offers a replicable, standardized process for retention and professional development of early career nurses.
- Career coaching sessions positively affected participants during project timeframe and are expected to show continued impact over time.

### Sustainability:

- Minimal resources (time & cost).
- Leader and organizational support.
- Intervention is within current responsibilities and workflow (NRP Coordinators or organizational coaches).

### Validity:

- Project utilized valid data collection methods & tools.
- The small number of participants decreases validity of statistical analysis.

### Limitations:

- Although engagement scores increased, they did not have statistically significant results and will take longitudinal surveillance for true impact.
- Voluntary participation and convenience sampling led to the low number of participants.

### Usefulness in Healthcare

- Project results will add to body of knowledge. Currently, no studies examine specific interventions with the target population and a variety of retention strategies are discussed without a consensus on best practice.
- The healthcare impact of retaining early career nurses includes positive professional, financial, and patient care outcome implications, and it should be considered as a feasible retention intervention for healthcare organizations.

### References



### Acknowledgements

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