

Virtual Evolution: Transforming Nurse Residency Delivery to Meet Today's Needs



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INTRODUCTION

Background:

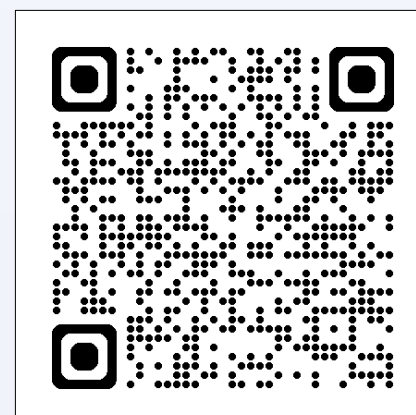
The transition from student to professional practice is a critical and often challenging period for Newly Licensed Registered Nurses (NLRNs).

- The 12-month Virtua, Nurse Residency Program (NRP) is designed to provide structured support to novice nurses through this transition.
- In 2024, Virtua's NRP enrolled more than 300 NLRNs and over 130 YTD (7/31/2025), resulting in cohorts of 75+ nurse residents.
- The NRP has evolved to meet the dynamic needs of healthcare and our new nurses.

Pre-Intervention State:

- 13 four-hour Nurse Residency seminars held in person at various locations through-out the health system.

Scan the QR code to find out more about Nurse Residency and seminars offered.



You can also find information about Nurse Residency on the Colleague Corner.



Challenges:

- Scheduling conflicts, shift work, personal obligations, and travel time between sites throughout the health system contribute to reduced Nurse Resident participation and increased seminar withdrawals and rescheduling.
- Facilitators have faced logistical issues: inconsistent access to learning spaces, equipment variability, and speaker availability.

Purpose:

This quality improvement (QI) initiative aimed to evaluate whether reformatting seminar delivery would better meet the needs of Nurse Residents, reduce barriers for facilitators, and increase seminar participation.

METHODS

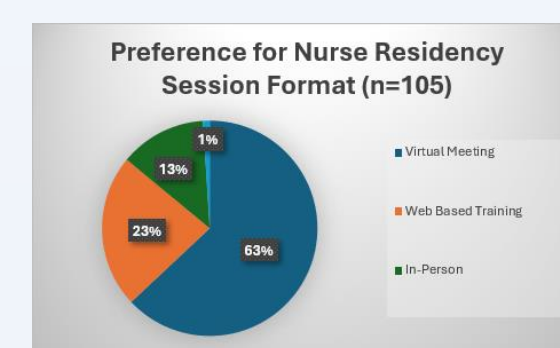
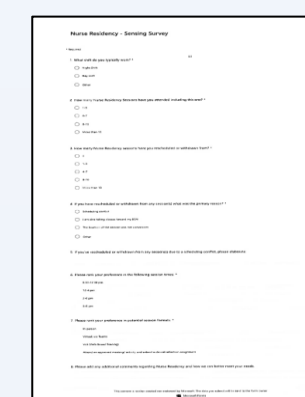
In February 2025, extenuating circumstances prompted the team to re-evaluate the delivery format for an End-of-Life NRP seminar. It was ultimately shifted to a Teams format and offered virtually. The virtual format was so well received that the team decided to look at potential ways to help support our newest nurses in attending these seminars using the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) framework.



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PLAN

- Deployed a sensing survey to gather feedback from Nurse Residents on their experiences and preferences.
- Survey results suggested that offering various learning formats for NRP seminars would increase seminar participation.



DO

- Offered hybrid options for two seminars in March and April 2025.
- To increase engagement, facilitators used breakout rooms, polls, and practiced with the various technologies in different learning spaces across the health system.

STUDY

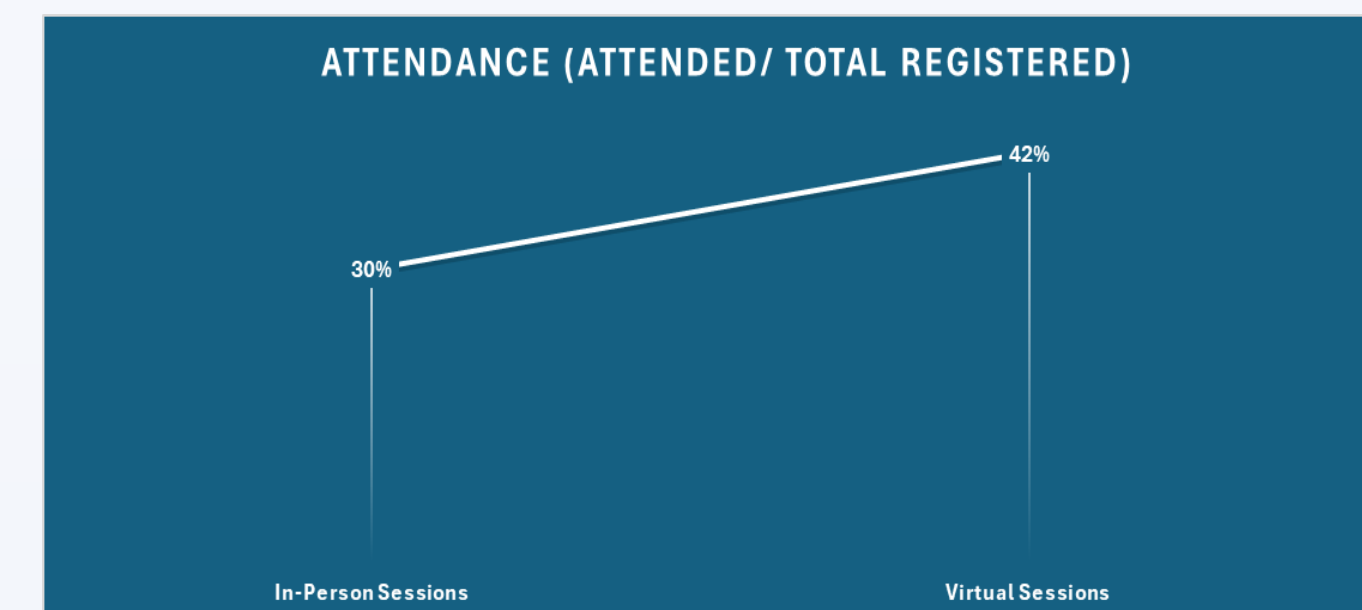
- Offering hybrid seminars increased seminar participation.
- Format was challenging as it required multiple facilitators, adaptability to technology in the different learning spaces and led to disjointed clinical reflections.

ACT

- Feedback from end of program evaluations and facilitator observations supported a shift from hybrid seminars, to a fully virtual format.

RESULTS

Since shifting to a fully virtual format, there has been a **40%** increase in seminar participation. Seminar withdrawals have decreased from 50% to 30%. Nurse Residents have reported reduced stress—particularly for night-shift staff—along with reduction in commuting time and a more comfortable learning environment.



What NR are saying about the change:

- *“As a night shift nurse, I truly appreciate the online option for the nurse residency classes!”*
- *“The online platform has been much easier to ensure I get to, as it is extremely stressful being a new nurse. Online allows for more rest.”*
- *“The speakers really encourage the viewers to engage and interact to make the session enjoyable and relatable! I like how they include visual slides, videos, images, and break out rooms to have the viewers be more engaged. I have had a great experience with the nurse residency program leaders so far into my first few months of nursing practice!”*
- *“Break out rooms and talking as small groups was particularly helpful when sharing experiences “*

FUTURE PLANS

Given the positive feedback, increased participation and a noticeable reduction in seminar withdrawals, the program will continue with a primarily virtual format. This approach maintains the educational integrity of the NRP while addressing key participation barriers.

DISCUSSION/IMPLICATIONS

Shifting back to virtual from in person delivery has been beneficial on so many levels. However, it has also come with some challenges. Despite concerns about diminished face-to-face interaction and networking opportunities, facilitators have implemented engagement tools such as polls and breakout rooms to foster active participation and connection during virtual seminars. Identifying creative content delivery methods via Teams to keep the seminars engaging has required self-training and time on the part of the facilitators.

Ongoing evaluation will focus on the impact of the virtual format on participation metrics, rescheduling rates, and cohort cohesion. The goal is to foster belonging to drive excellence while supporting cohesive learning cohorts, promoting networking and camaraderie, and ensuring a sense of professional identity—all of which contribute to the professional development and retention of NLRNs. **Improving engagement and reducing stress levels of our newest nurses is a priority for the NRP facilitation team and aligns with Virtua Health's guiding principles.**

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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