

Impact of a New Graduate Programme on staff retention in a tertiary paediatric cardio-respiratory intensive care unit

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INTRODUCTION AND AIMS

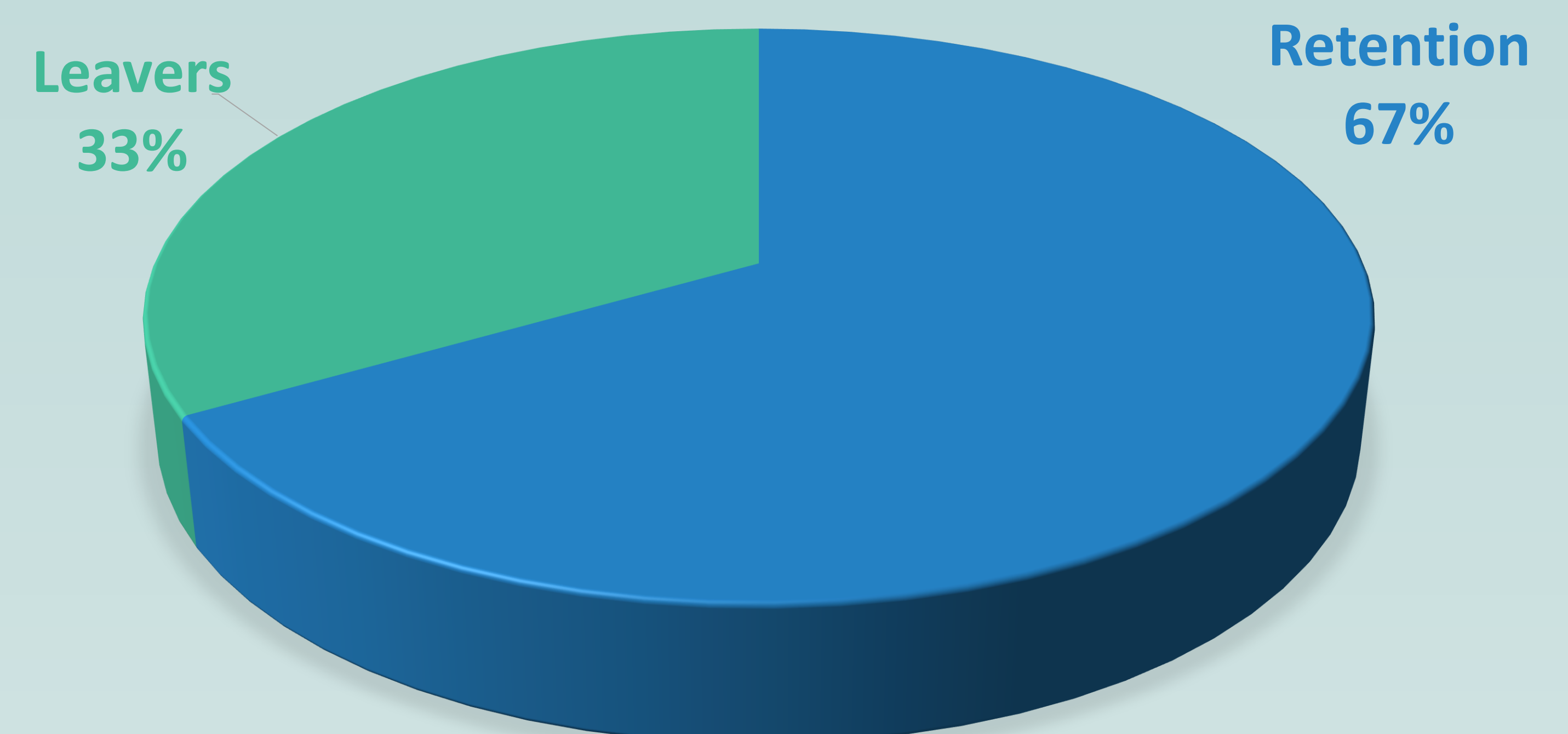
Historically the complex PICU environment attracted more experienced nurses given the highly specialised skills required. Due to staff shortages, recruitment challenges, and the need for higher staffing levels in the PICU setting, recruitment of newly qualified nurses (NQNs) directly into intensive care was identified (1,2). A paediatric New Graduate Programme (NGP) at Royal Brompton Hospital (RBH) – a tertiary cardiorespiratory centre - was established in 2013 to help facilitate the integration of NQNs into the intensive care environment.

METHODS

A programme of 3-weeks classroom teaching including theoretical sessions, hands-on skills stations, nursing simulation - scenarios, and clinical observation days. Feedback was used to improve the programme as required. The 3-week training is followed by a 6 to 8 weeks period of supervised practice working alongside experienced PICU nurses. Then the NQNs work independently, supported by a clinical educator, caring for stable ventilated PICU patients, with the aim to progress towards competencies to care for patients post cardiac surgical interventions from 6 to 12 months. Two comprehensive study days at 3/12 and 6/12 post the initial course completion were developed to help consolidate their theoretical knowledge and skills.

RESULTS

OVERALL RETENTION SEPTEMBER 2017 TO SEPTEMBER 2022



Data collected between September 2017 and September 2022 showed that 18 NQNs have attended the PICU NGP with a 67% (n=12) retention rate up to date. Typically, NQNs progress to completing PICU course after 2 years of starting as NQNs to facilitate PICU career progression.

NQNs usually progress to a Band 6 position within 3-4 years of qualifying. Recently 4 nurses that started as NQNs before 2017 were promoted to a Band 7 PICU sister post.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Investment into a PICU NGP can be a successful addition to recruitment, retention strategy of NQN and investment in career progression in a highly specialised and stressful PICU environment.

REFERENCES

- (1) Collard SS, Scammell J, Tee S. Closing the gap on nurse retention: A scoping review of implications for undergraduate education. *Nurse education today*, 2020 Jan; 84:104253.
- (2) Elias CE, Day T. Experiences of Newly Qualified Nurses in Critical Care: A qualitative systematic review. *Journal of the Intensive Care Society* 2020 Nov;21(4):334-343.