



# The Johns Hopkins Clinical Nurse Externship Program: A Proven Nurse Recruitment Tool

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## Background

Nurse externship programs have been used as a recruitment tool by healthcare institutions, to address the current nursing shortage. Prior to 2021, nursing departments within Johns Hopkins Hospital, hired clinical nurse externs (CNEs) locally. In 2021 the hospital moved to hiring them centrally through the Float Pool (FP), previously known as the Supplemental Staffing Unit (SSU), to standardize the education provided and improve their clinical skills. It became the responsibility of the SSU Nursing Professional Practice Specialists (NPPDS) to develop this new curriculum.

## Aims of the Project

1. To develop an education curriculum that would bridge the gap between nursing school and the bedside during a 10-week program. The specific aims of the curriculum were to:

- Increase confidence
- Improve clinical skills
- Increase familiarity with the nursing environment and socializing to the hospital culture

2. Utilize the Clinical Externship Program as a recruitment tool for new graduate nurses.

## Description of the Intervention

### PDSA Method- A Model for Improvement

**PLAN:** The Float Pool and NPPDS' collaborated to determine the overall objectives of the new program.

1. Develop an educational program to address knowledge gaps in nursing students caused by decreased in-hospital clinical time during the pandemic.
2. Improve the clinical skills of nursing students within the hospital setting by including an introduction day with information on JHHS and the program, initial skills class, and basic nursing assessment class.
3. Increase exposure to nursing role by having CNEs mentored by nurses instead of paired with UAP staff during clinical shifts.
4. Increase the number of new graduate RNs hired into the system by recruiting those in the 10-week program

**DO:** Implemented the new program and educational content in summer of 2021

**STUDY:** Distributed an end of program survey and analyzed the responses which addressed the main objectives of the program redesign.

**ACT:** According to the results of the survey, the FP and NPPDS' regrouped to make suggested changes for the next cohort.

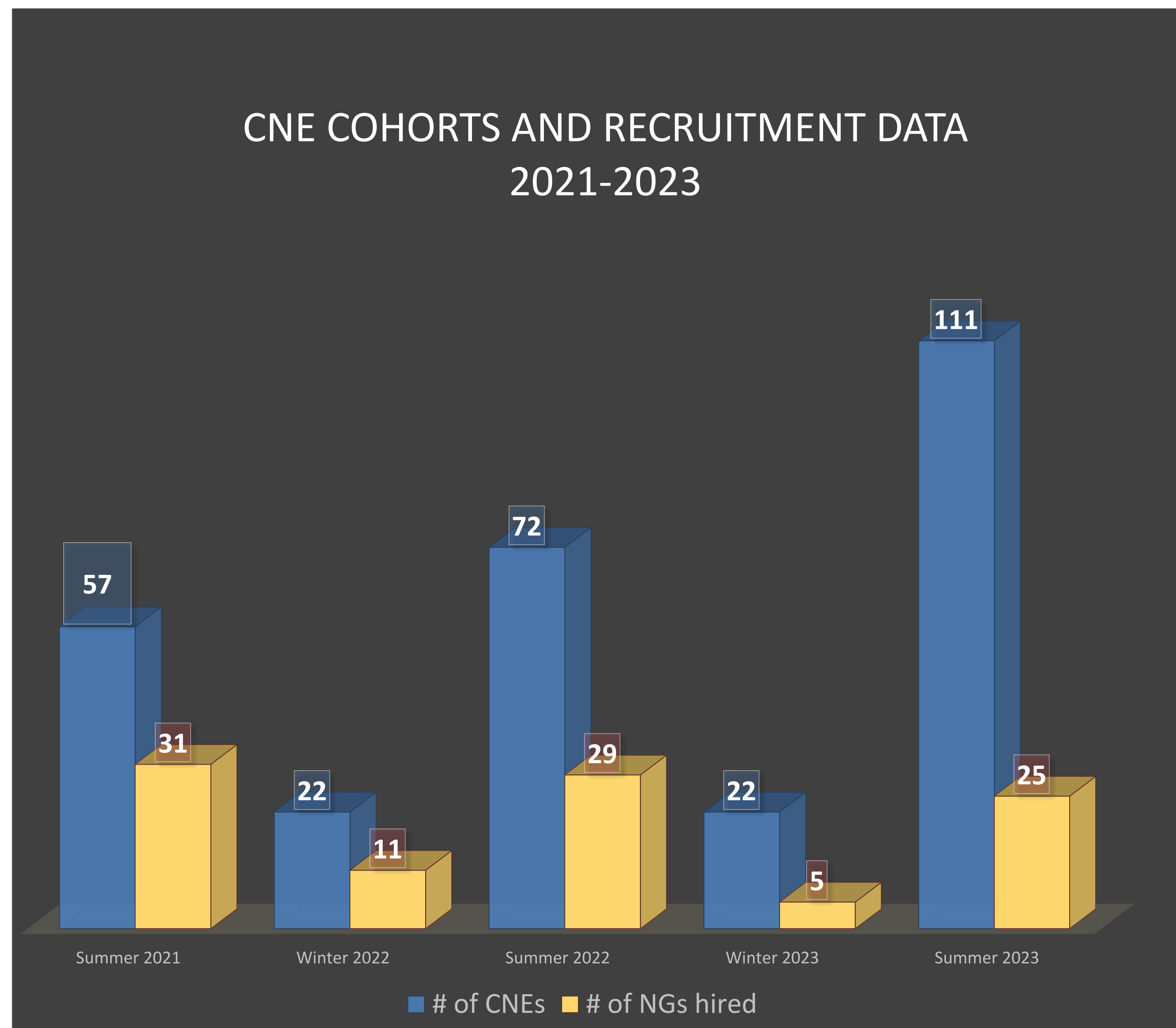
## Description of Data Collection and Analysis

A survey was distributed to the CNE participants at the end of the 2021 summer program to analyze their thoughts and opinions of the program and educational content. Data has also been tracked on CNE conversions to RN positions since 2021 after each co-hort.

Results included...

- CNE expressed increased confidence in hands-on clinical skills.
- The skills labs and didactic classes were helpful in improving those clinical skills at bedside for the CNEs.
- The CNEs wanted more exposure to specialty areas versus one unit.
- The recruitment of CNEs has resulted in an overall 30% conversion rate to RN positions within the JHHS since 2021.
- Summer 2023; limited results since many participants have not graduated yet.*

## Outcomes Measures or Results



## Educational Curriculum

- Introduction and Welcome Day
  - Intro to the Float Pool Department
  - Meet FP Leadership team
  - Hospital orientation
  - Program overview
- Basic Nursing Skills Review and Practice
  - POCT glucometer
  - Trach Care and suctioning
  - Foley insertion and removal
  - Central line dressing
  - Restraint application
- Basic Nursing Assessment Class
  - CAUTI and CLABSI prevention and metrics
  - Head to Toe Assessment; What are we looking for?
  - IV-line identification and medication compatibility
  - Respiratory interventions
- Dysrhythmia Class
  - Provided EKG basics to the IMC/ICU and ED placements
- Shadow Time
  - Provided observation time in an area of interest/ specialty different from where they were placed for the duration of the program

## Program Changes

Since the initial 2021 Summer Program, several changes have been done based on the feedback from participants and JHHS leadership.

- "Pods" have been created to increase the CNEs' exposure to multiple units
- Summer- only participation is offered to expand the recruitment into the summer program to include students not from the Baltimore area.
- The program now expands across both JHH and JHBMC campuses.

## References

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