

Emotional Intelligence in Nursing

What makes one nurse shine compared to another? Moreover, what predicts a great nurse's performance and drives patient satisfaction?

The answer lies in a combination of three key parts that make up an individual.

1. What the nurse knows (stemming in part from his or her IQ and education)
2. Who that provider is (his or her personality style)
3. How that provider handles himself or herself, patients, and colleagues on the job.

Emotional Intelligence (EQ) is this third major contributor to health care provider success. Nursing professionals work in a highly emotionally driven environment, in which decisions are made that literally may determine life or death for a patient. As nurses interact with their patients, emotions surface, whether they notice them or not. EQ research supported over the last 20 years verifies how contagious the emotions of professionals can be to the people around them.

A CLOSER LOOK...

A study conducted on 23 nursing teams explored the relationship between EQ and nursing team performance. Health care quality and group cohesiveness were each positively affected by EQ in nursing teams. The study also found that the higher the score was for the "best" team member (optimism/mood regulation), the more the quality of care increased in the whole unit.¹

The TalentSmart® Mastering Emotional Intelligence Training Program is a sound investment that yields significant improvements in nursing performance and patient satisfaction.

After participating in TalentSmart's Emotional Intelligence training programs, leaders at one of the largest US not-for-profit health systems experienced a 93% improvement in their ability to handle conflict

effectively, a 57% improvement in their ability to deal effectively with change, and a 54% improvement in their ability to communicate clearly and effectively.



TalentSmart's two-level program helps broaden awareness of the role emotions have in day-to-day interactions and gives specific EQ practice strategies that help trainees achieve their professional goals.

The Case for EQ in Nursing...

Emotional Intelligence training for nurses is not just recommended, but it is crucial to the healthcare industry. The ability to remain calm under extreme stress and to manage emotions effectively in oneself and as they relate to others are part of EQ skills—and these skills can be developed.

Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize and understand emotions in yourself and others, and your ability to use this awareness to manage your behavior and relationships. EQ is made up of four core skills that pair up under two primary competencies: personal competence and social competence.



Personal Competence

Personal competence is made up of your self-awareness and self-management skills, which focus more on you individually than on your interactions with other people. Personal competence is your ability to stay aware of your emotions and manage your behavior and tendencies.

- Self-Awareness is your ability to accurately perceive your emotions and stay aware of them as they happen.
- Self-Management is your ability to use awareness of your emotions to stay flexible and positively direct your behavior.

Social Competence

Social competence is made up of your social awareness and relationship management skills; social competence is your ability to understand other people’s moods, behavior, and motives in order to improve the quality of your relationships.

- Social Awareness is your ability to accurately pick up on emotions in other people and understand what is really going on.
- Relationship Management is your ability to use awareness of your emotions and others’ emotions to manage interactions successfully.



EQ and the HCAHPS Survey

On the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) survey, 16 of the 25 items can be influenced by EQ skills. For example, six items that refer to care provided by nurses and doctors include courtesy, respect, listening, and giving clear explanations. Nurses who are socially competent are better able to attend to their patients’

comfort and understanding, as well as the concerns, questions, and emotions coming from a patient's family or advocate. In a hectic hospital environment filled with patients, worried families, and busy teams of doctors, nurses, and staff, EQ skills contribute to delivering high-quality care. Health care organizations that invest in helping staff better meet the emotional needs that the patient experience requires will see positive feedback from their patients in HCAHPS survey results.

In a study of 350 nurses, higher emotional intelligence scores also positively affected performance, career length, and retention scores.² Nurses with a transformative leadership style who were high in EQ put in the extra effort to achieve, were more effective at their work, and were more satisfied with their jobs. Simply put, high-EQ nurses work harder, perform better, and have higher job satisfaction, which leads to less turnover and hiring/training costs.

Bringing It All Together...

Investing in EQ training for your nursing staff will not only boost patient care and career satisfaction but will contribute to a more efficiently run health care system. This has a positive effect on not just your patients and staff but each and every individual who walks through your building's doors.

1. Quidbach & Hansenne. The impact of trait emotional intelligence on nursing team performance and cohesiveness. *Journal of Professional Nursing*; 25(1): 23-29, (2007).
2. Codier, Freel, Kamikawa, Kooker, & Shoultz. Emotional intelligence, performance, and retention in clinical staff nurses. *Nursing Administration Quarterly*; Oct-Dec 33(4): 310-316, (2009).

For more information about the TalentSmart® Emotional Intelligence Training Program, call 1-888-818-SMART, or visit us at www.TalentSmartEQ.com