UK Plan for Nursing Technician Assistance with the SHINE Study

**Problem:** We have found that it is difficult for Stroke Unit nurses to enthusiastically embrace all aspects of the SHINE trial considering they frequently feel understaffed and overwhelmed covering the clinical care of patients on our busy stroke ward. Adding research tasks without additional resources was a major concern for our nursing leaders (and more importantly our front line clinical staff) even though the SHINE Champion was the Neuroscience floor nursing director who attended the investigator's meeting and was overall supportive of the research protocol and goals.

**Solution:** Utilize “moonlighting” nursing technicians as a critical bridge between the research aspects and clinical care of SHINE patients. Techs assist in the care of all SHINE patients regardless of assignment to control or intervention group. The specific process included:

1. “SHINE study techs” were recruited from the ED and Neurology floor pool of nursing technicians. Nursing leaders in each area sent out an email on our behalf inviting them to a SHINE informational session to learn about the study and their responsibilities in the protocol. During this one hour initial meeting, we discussed compensation, which would be the same as their current hourly wage (with accommodation for overtime if they exceeded 40hr in 1 week because of their involvement in coverage).

2. For those that were interested, we asked them to submit a schedule of availability for the month, so we would have a better idea of who might be available/interested to help when we enrolled a SHINE subject.

3. After a subject is enrolled, we call the techs that reported availability to cover the night shifts (7p-7a) for the initial 72 hours; on weekends we try to have 24 hour coverage if possible, so coordinator only needs to be present during the nursing change of shift. Most of the time, we have been able to find tech coverage for night shifts although 24-hour weekend coverage has been more challenging. Much of the training of the techs has been “just in time training” on the ward at the beginning of their first shift.

4. In our experience, utilizing nursing techs to assist in the SHINE study has been a ‘win-win’ for both the SHINE study team and the nurses providing clinical care to the SHINE subjects on the stroke ward. We get an extra study team member recognize and communicate any SHINE subject problems, help the nurses manage the GlucoStabilizer and to help us adhere to the protocol; With this setup, our research coordinators do not have to be in house constantly watching over the process. The clinical care team gets an “extra” tech whose main responsibility is to carry out the protocol and if possible, assist on the ward. The SHINE nursing techs (most of whom are from the ED or the Stroke Unit) get to learn about research from the NETT team members and make some extra income while they do the duties they have already been trained to do (Finger stick blood glucose, etc.).

For additional information about this process and how it has helped us, please feel free to contact Roger Humphries, rlhump0@uky.edu