



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY  
WEXNER MEDICAL CENTER

# Student Nurse Externship Program: An Innovative Investment for the Workforce

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# Objectives

- Share knowledge about the background and implementation of a successful student nurse externship program and the intentional work that allowed the program to transform and thrive to meet changes in the workforce pipeline while producing desirable organizational outcomes
- Review organizational benefits of implementing a student nurse externship program
- Explain the essential components of a student nurse externship program and identify keyways they can support within their organization

# OSUWMC: We're central Ohio's only academic medical center



**7**

hospitals

**1,404**

staffed beds

**17**

multispecialty  
centers

**NCI-**

designated  
comprehensive  
cancer center

**100+**

facilities



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# Program Overview

Nursing leaders at an academic health system collaborated with Human Resources and college of nursing affiliates to design and implement an innovative Student Nurse Externship Program (SNEP). Based on evidence, organizational needs, and financial resources, a successful SNEP has proven to be an important recruitment tool and a sustainable program. This program continues to meet workforce needs and produce measurable outcomes related to recruitment, program satisfaction, increased confidence, clinical knowledge, clinical decision making, and decreased anxiety. The SNEP has allowed for expanded relationships with CONs throughout the country to be leveraged as a long-term recruitment opportunity.

# Program Goals

- Recruit top talent from across the country for SNA and RN roles
- Improve readiness for practice
- Improve and expand relationships with CONs



# Program Goals for Externs

- Identify career opportunities at OSUWMC
- Increase confidence and decrease anxiety in clinical decision making
- Gain exposure to and understanding of nursing roles in a variety of practice settings



# Stakeholders

- Executive Nursing Leadership
- Nursing Directors
- Unit Managers
- Unit Preceptors
- NPDPs
- HR representatives
- Marketing
- Externs
- Interprofessional experts
- Colleges of Nursing



# Planning and Resources

Literature  
Review for Outcomes

Reviewed Nursing Schools'  
Curriculum

Evaluated  
Workforce  
Needs

Financial  
Opportunities

Business  
Plan/Program  
Approval

# Marketing

- **Recruiting Flyer for Colleges of Nursing**
- **Visits to Medical Surgical College Classes**
- **Created Program Resources**
  - **Student Nurse Externship Guidelines**
  - **Preceptor Guidelines**
  - **FAQs**



## **The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center – Arthur G. James Cancer Hospital and Richard J. Solove Research Institute Student Nurse Extern Program**

Maximize your career experience by joining The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center – Arthur G. James Cancer Hospital and Richard J. Solove Research Institute Student Nurse Externship!

The Student Nurse Externship is a continuous eight-week summer program in which nursing students work with highly skilled nurse preceptors gaining experience with multidisciplinary teams, in diverse specialty care areas in an atmosphere of learning and support.

### **Who qualifies?**

Nursing students enrolled in an accredited program who've completed their junior year of a baccalaureate program.

### **What are the program requirements?**

- Students must be enrolled in an ACEN or CCNE accredited baccalaureate program
- Students must have a GPA of 3.2 or greater
- Students will be asked to provide a letter of recommendation from a clinical instructor
- Students will be asked to complete a HireVue electronic interview.
- Students will write a 250-word essay describing how the externship experience will influence their transition from a student nurse to a professional nurse
- Transcripts or advising report must be provided

### **What's the program like?**

Externs are paired with an experienced RN preceptor for 32-36 hours per week on an inpatient unit. Participants will follow their paired preceptor's schedule.

Externs earn a competitive hourly wage while increasing the skills and knowledge needed to transition to being a professional nurse.

Weekly schedules will be designed to allow externs to have diversified experiences, including hands-on patient care, professional development sessions, discussions and observational experiences.

To learn more about the program or how to apply, visit [go.osu.edu/nursingexternship](https://go.osu.edu/nursingexternship).



# Program Socialization

- Present at Nurse Manager Staff meetings
- Share the "why" behind the program to participating units
- Attend Unit Staff meetings
- Posts on TheHub
- Connect with preceptors, share the benefits of serving as an extern preceptor
- Connect with practice settings to support shadow experiences
- Proactive rounding prior to program starting
- Intentional unit rounding throughout 8-week program
- Provide units information about the program, externs and serving as a preceptor

## Apply for Summer Student Nurse Extern Program

This is for rising senior nursing students in a BSN program.

Health System Nursing +2 more

 HealthBeat HUB January 06, 2025



 6  0 

# Canidate Selection

## **To be considered:**

- ✓ Be enrolled in an accredited baccalaureate nursing program and completed junior year of curriculum
- ✓ Maintain a GPA of 3.2 or higher
- ✓ Completed a HireVue electronic interview
- ✓ Write a 250-word essay describing how the externship could influence the transition from student nurse to professional nurse
- ✓ Provide school transcripts

## **Program Leaders:**

- ✓ Review candidates' applications components
- ✓ Meet with individual candidates on teams/zoom
- ✓ Communicate with HR to extend a formal offer and assign a unit
- ✓ Track # of externs offered/accepted and # of externs on participating units
- ✓ Communicate with unit leaders

# Implementation

8 week Program

Orientation to organizational and SNE Role and Skills

1:1 Precepted Shifts on Assigned Unit

Shadow Experiences in 2 areas of choice

Four Seminars

# Implementation

## Seminars

### Content

- Emergency response
- De escalation
- Civility
- Quality
- Safe patient mobility
- Professional Communication
- Professional development
- Panel discussions
- Well-being and resiliency
- Program completion  
Celebration

### Design

- 4, 4-hour, interactive seminars
- Include all externs
- Focus on relationships and peer connections
- Open discussion/ Q&A
- Well-being breaks
- Exposure to organizational resources and support

### Panel discussions

- Former externs working as staff nurses
- Includes experienced nurses working in specialized roles and/or practice settings

### Professional Development

- Resumes
- Interview skills
- Organizational short- and long-term professional development opportunities

### Facilitators

- NPDPs
- PT/OT
- HR
- Chaplains
- Nurse leaders
- Quality experts

# Data Collection

- # of externs
- Colleges of Nurses
- Participating hospitals
- Participating Units
- Participating SNAs
- SNA unit transitions after being a SNE
- SNE to SNA role after completion
- SNE to RN roles
- Former SNE to RN retention
- NASC-CDM scale pre-post results
- Program satisfaction
- SNE student clinical placements



# Outcomes

Program year	# of SNEs	# SNAs participating	# of new SNAs after SNE	SNE to RN	# of CONs represented	# out of state CONs
2022	37	9	12	22 (59%)	16	4
2023	35	7	9	19 (54%)	15	4
2024	69	20	15	36 (52%)	21	6
2025	71	22	pending	pending	27	11
<b>totals</b>	212	58	36	77		

# Outcomes

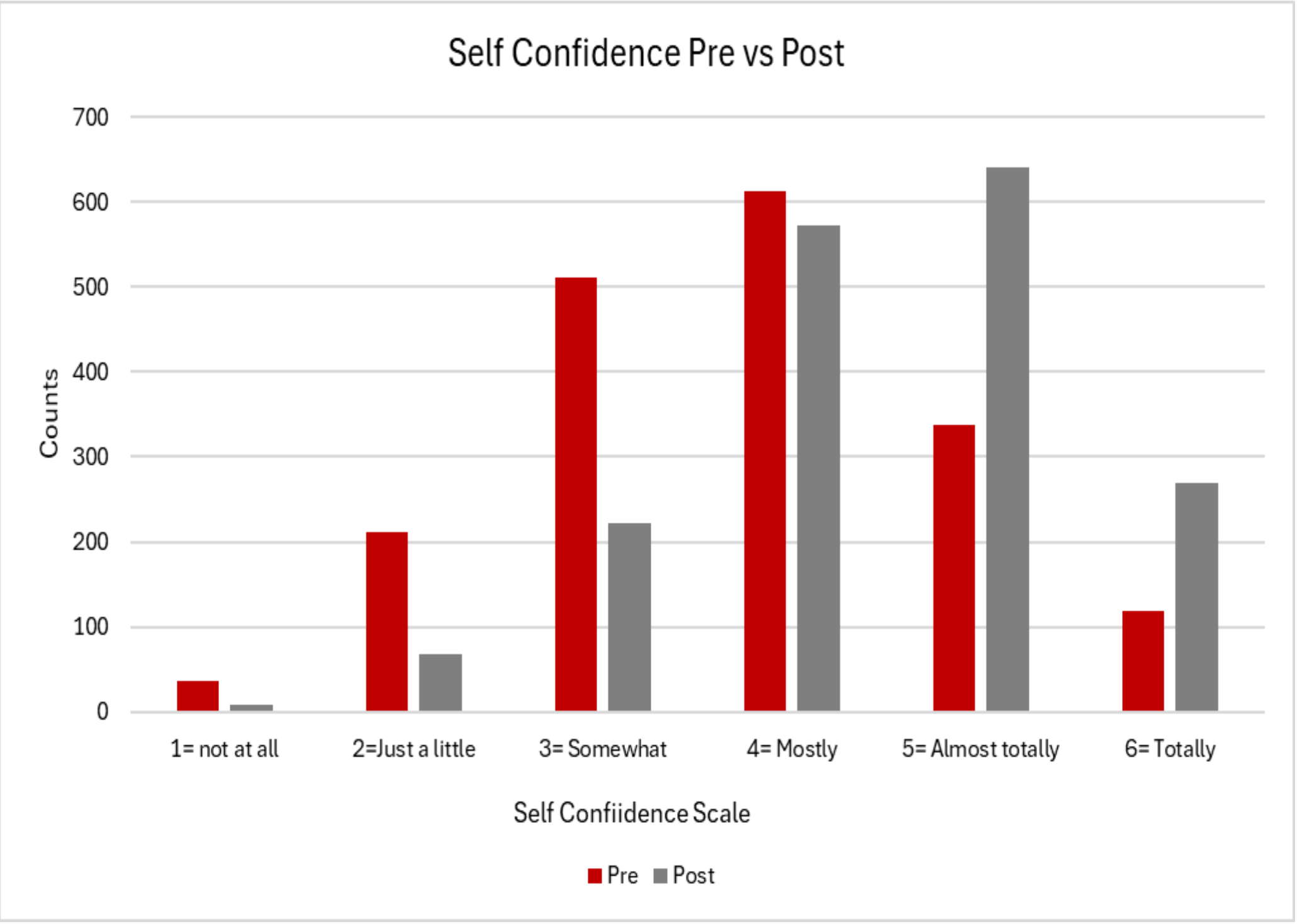
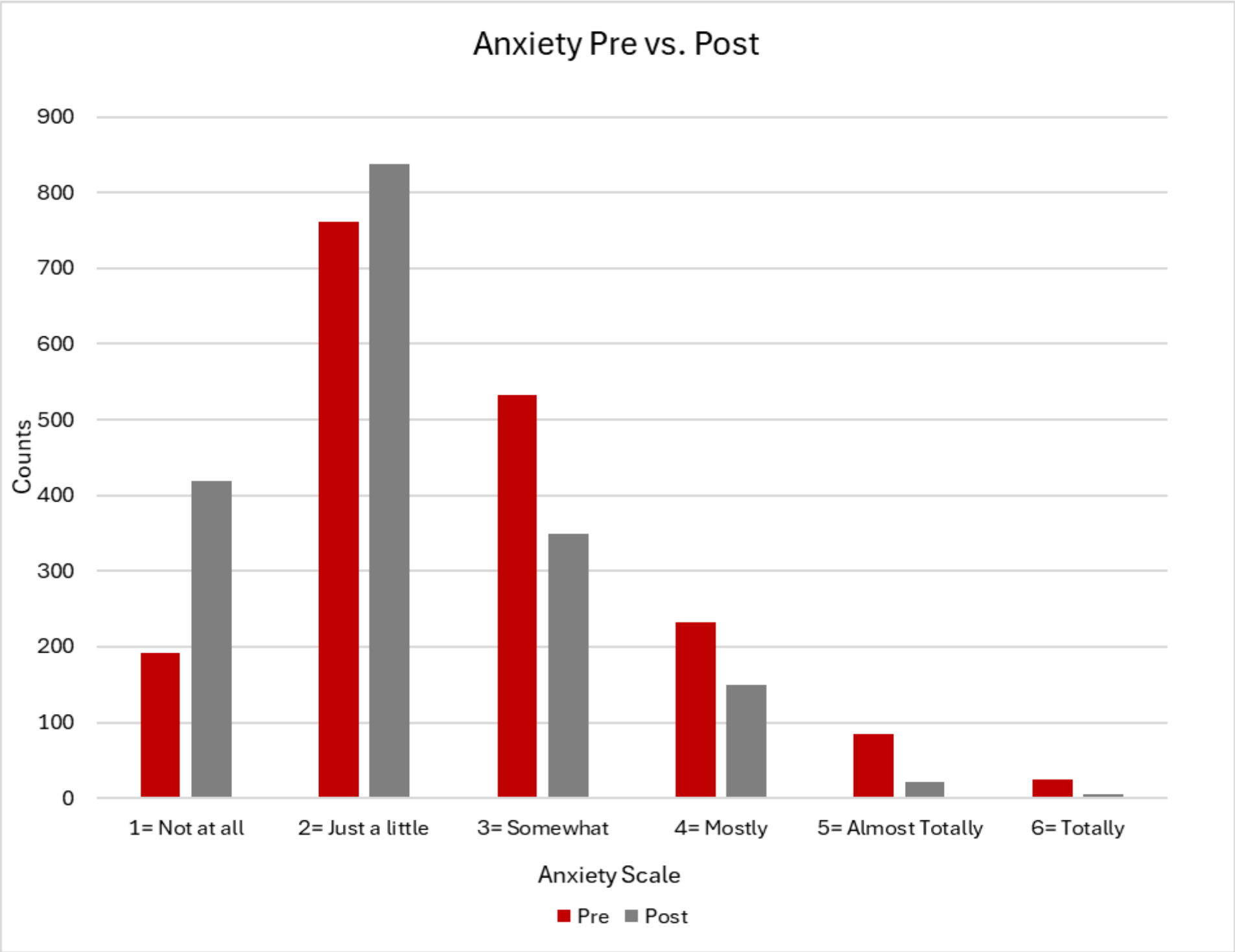
ROI	Percentage
SNE to RN	55%
SNE to new SNA	34%
% of SNEs as SNAs after program	51%

\*includes participants from 2022, 2023 and 2024



# Outcomes

## Nursing Anxiety and Self Confidence with Clinical Decision Making Scale (NASC-DM)



# Colleges of Nursing Representation

The Ohio State University	Ohio University	Xavier	Morgan State	University of Illinois	University of Kentucky	Bowling Green State University	Indiana Wesleyan University
Miami University	Purdue University	Walsh University	Franciscan University of Steubenville	Muskingum University	Howard University	Belmont University	Otterbein University
Capital University	Wright State	Texas Christian University	University of South Carolina	Akron University	Michigan State University	Mount Carmel College of Nursing	University of Tennessee
Malone University	Clemson University	University of Toledo	Shawnee State University	Cedarville University	Langston University	Ashland University	Case Western University
University of Cincinnati	Kent State University	University of Pittsburgh	University of North Georgia	University of Tampa	The Catholic University of America	Wittenberg University	Youngstown State University
			Bellarmino University	Baldwin Wallace University			

# Implications for Practice

Externship programs can increase self-confidence and decrease anxiety in student nurses and future new graduate nurses

Exposure to diverse care settings can influence externs first roles as an RN

Relationships with colleges of nursing can positively impact RN recruitment and increase student clinical placements

Workforce pipeline initiatives and programs are essential to recruitment and retention of RNs

SNE to RN long term retention should be explored



# Lessons Learned

SNE Role delineation is crucial

Maintain open communication with units

Provide organizational branded items

Create data tracking dashboard

Former extern panel discussion

High engagement learning

Support peer connections and networking

Be mindful of unit placements



# References

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