

Improving Nursing Student Outcomes: A Quality Improvement Initiative to Implement a Structured Clinical Teaching Program

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Topic: Academic Nursing: Excellence & Innovation

Category: Quality Improvement/Evidence-Based Practice Project

Abstract

Background/Introduction

Upon graduation, 23% of newly graduated nursing programs across the United States demonstrate essential nurse competencies and practice readiness (Kavanagh & Szveda, 2017). The lack of uniformity and structure in faculty engagement with students at the project site resulted in inconsistent student performance in simulations, quality interactions in clinical, and didactic course exam performance. The integrated literature review results found the use of structure and clinical questions assist in advancing engagement and elicit higher-order thinking.

Purpose

To increase competencies for entry into practice by promoting clinical judgement by actively engaging faculty with students in the clinical environment using structured clinical questions versus the current teaching structure.

Methods or Processes/Procedures

Students interacted with clinical instructors in the clinical environment using structured weekly objectives that were created using Tanner's (2006) clinical judgement model. Activities included patient reports, medication administration, patient assessments, intervention rationales, and physician communication. All students received the structure and half of the students used structure and questioning prompts to assist in developing critical thinking.

Results

The student groups using structured objectives (non-intervention) performed better than groups using the structured objectives and clinical questions (intervention) in simulation. The intervention group performed statistically better on exam one than the non-intervention group. No significant findings among groups in relation to the amount of time spent engaging with clinical faculty improved student performance.

Limitations

Implementation of structured clinical objectives prior implementation may have lessened the impact of project outcomes. The size of the clinical questioning tool was burdensome and not consistently used by faculty.

Conclusions/Implications for Practice

Using a structured teaching format identified program weaknesses, evaluated clinical faculty performance differences, and provided an evidence-based structure to the newest clinical faculty. Recommendations for practice include the full integration of course related structured weekly objectives and clinical questioning as students progress through a nursing degree program.

Biography

Karen LaNasa DNP, MSN, RN Clinical Assistant Professor Scholarship interests: Medical Surgical, clinical judgement, process improvement, clinical reasoning, Education and Nursing Innovation BIO: Dr. Karen LaNasa has been a nurse since 1998 is course manager for Adult Concepts I and II for face to face and online delivery. She received her RN diploma in 1998 and my MSN in Nursing Leadership in 2011. Her experience is in Oncology, Bone Marrow Transplant, In-patient and Out-patient Oncology Units. She served as manager for an out-patient Oncology Unit. For the last seven years she has been the course manager in medical surgical concepts.

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