

Academic Nursing: Excellence & Innovation

Background/Introduction

Beginning one's journey into nursing education can be filled with anxiety, apprehension and feelings associated with imposter syndrome. Providing a healthy work environment in nursing education is foundational to developing the health, well-being, and resilience of the future nursing workforce. American Association Colleges of Nursing joined Johnson & Johnson in 2021 supporting a national campaign effort to promote resilience and wellness in the healthcare workforce. Cultivating a healthy work environment begins in the academic nursing setting utilizing strategies focused on collaboration, communication, civility, and self-care.

Purpose

The purpose of this innovative educational teaching strategy was to revamp the undergraduate nursing students' first clinical practicum course orientation to promote a healthy work environment.

Methods

Utilizing critical caring pedagogy, the clinical practicum course orientation was redesigned to highlight the importance of caring, civility and develop a sense of community within the cohort from the beginning of the program. Shifting from the traditional review of course expectations, syllabus, and assignments the clinical practicum orientation begins with team building activities, small group trauma informed icebreakers and self-reflection opportunities focusing on a healthy work environment in the academic setting. Support services from key areas within the university participate to welcome undergraduate nursing students establishing "critical caring" and development of authentic interpersonal relationships during this transition into nursing academia.

Results

Implementation of the critical caring pedagogy has had a positive impact on students and faculty.

Limitations

Formal survey data has not been gathered from undergraduate nursing students thus results are based on qualitative feedback.

Conclusion

Nursing education must focus on a healthy work environment in the academic setting. Utilizing evidence-based strategies nurse educators should continue to explore innovations that transform nursing education. Changes integrated within the clinical practicum orientation have created a culture of civility where students can feel safe in their learning environment and develop a sense of community.