

## Collaboration Between Nursing Service and Nurse Educators to Improve the Quality of the Clinical Teaching/Learning Experiences of Staff Nurses and Students in Clinical Agencies

Amy Harmer Cox, RN, APN, MSN, Geraldine Matsumura, APRN, PhD, Sheri Palmer, MSN, RN, and Lynn Clark Callister, RN, PhD, FAAN

A study using both qualitative and quantitative measures was done to identify staff nurse perceptions of the contributions of students to clinical agencies. Two hundred twenty-five nurses from four specialty groups participated in the study from eight clinical acute care and community based agencies. A 54 item tool (Grindel and associates, 2001) was used. Highest ranked items indicated ambivalence on the part of staff nurses, with the highest item being "allows opportunities for mentoring" and the second highest item being "threatens professional role development." Qualitative data also identified benefits and challenges of working with students in clinical agencies.

Nurse educators are working with nurse administrators and staff nurses in one clinical agency to improve the quality of the clinical teaching and learning experiences. The agency interviewed staff nurses about their perceptions in followup of the initial study and themes were identified. After reviewing the data from both studies, unit managers made suggestions for nurse educators for improving those mentoring relationships. Strategies were generated to implement these suggestions.

Interventions are being implemented, including involving clinical faculty in staff meetings, having faculty share positive student comments, a college of nursing recognition award for outstanding mentors, evaluations by staff nurses and students on an ongoing basis, and other strategies.

Acute care clinical placements for student nurses are becoming more competitive. By collaborating with nursing service, nurse educators are seeking to improve the quality of teaching and learning for both staff nurse mentors and student mentees.

Grindel, G.G., Bateman, A.L., Potsdaugther, C.A., Babington, L.M. & Medici, G. (2001). Student contributions to clinical agencies. *Nursing and Health Care Perspectives*, 22(4), 197-202.