

INTEGRATING EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE INTO A PEDIATRIC NURSING COURSE

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Purpose/Aim: To describe how evidence based nursing practice concepts were integrated into an undergraduate pediatric nursing course.

Rationale: Recommendations from various nursing organizations/projects such as the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, National League for Nursing Board of Governors and the National Nursing Education Study (funded by the Carnegie Foundation) continue to emphasize the need for nurse educators to integrate evidence-based practice into nursing curriculum. Critical thinking, personal reflection, and reflective writing linked to nursing practice, are integral components in understanding and using evidence based nursing practice concepts.

Description of the Undertaking: A variety of strategies were considered when planning learning opportunities to promote students' initiation, enhancement, and improvement of searching, critical thinking, and reflective writing skills. The strategies selected needed to be used in both classroom and clinical settings, facilitate individual, partner, and small group efforts (collaboration), enhance reflective writing, and reflect current nursing practice questions. Strategies involve gathering evidence to answer clinical practice questions, analyzing and evaluating the data, questioning the information in relationship to nursing principles, and interpreting the implications and outcomes to pediatric nursing practice as well as to the student's individual nursing practice. The setting determined the faculty's choice of strategy. Single strategies, such as searching and gathering data were used to prepare students for content presented in the classroom setting. As part of the classroom experience, strategies such as analyzing and evaluating, questioning, or interpreting implications to pediatric nursing practice were used to facilitate students' understanding and utilization of evidence based nursing practice. These strategies were also implemented in the clinical setting during post-conferences. Another experience was designed to link critical thinking, reflection, reflective writing, and nursing practice while fostering collaboration among student partners. During clinical orientation students identify a partner and select a nursing practice clinical question from a list provided by the faculty. Clinical practice questions are generated by the faculty mentor from pediatric list serves, practice journals, and facility unit suggestions, e.g. does lactobacillus gg facilitate positive immune responses when taken during antibiotic therapy? Students then begin to search the literature, gathering evidence to answer the clinical question. They are required to write a short paper (5-10) pages in length, describing their analysis and evaluation of the data and their interpretation of the information's relationship to nursing principles. They must also provide a summary of the implications and outcomes to pediatric nursing practice as well as their own individual nursing practice. The students present a brief report of their effort to their peer colleagues and complete an evaluation of their individual as well as their partner's team effort and contribution to the project.

Outcomes/Conclusions: Students' comments indicate that their knowledge of and use of evidence based nursing practice concepts is improved. The identified strategies are successful in facilitating students' critical thinking, personal reflection, and reflective writing linked to pediatric and personal evidence based nursing practice.

Objective: To identify how evidence based nursing practice can be linked to theory and clinical practice content.

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