Creating Healthy Work Environments 2019

A Pilot Study: An Interprofessional Educational Activity Between Nursing and Physical Therapy Students

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Background

In the health care setting, teamwork and collaboration is essential in promoting patient centered care & the achievement of positive patient outcomes. The Quality and Safety Education for Nurses (QSEN) recommends interprofessional learning experiences directed at closing the knowledge, skills and attitudes gaps among healthcare pre-licensure students. Experiences aimed at students to work more effectively as health care teams have found significant changes in beliefs and attitudes toward team communication, motivation, utility of training, and self-efficacy (Brock, Abu-Rish, Chiu, et. Al, 2013). To prepare future nurses and physical therapists, interprofessional education must be appropriately threaded across the curriculum to promote future healthy work environments. A pilot research study was implemented to examine changes in Nursing Students’ (NS) teamwork, collaboration and role identity following participation in a collaborative educational activity using patient care scenarios with graduate level Physical Therapy Students (PTS) and undergraduate NS. For the interprofessional exercise, the PTS used the format of a peer assisted learning (PAL) role. The long term aim of this study was to promote a healthy future work environment in teamwork, communication and respect and role appreciation between these future bedside healthcare providers.

Methods

A pre and post assessment of students’ perceptions using the revised Readiness for Interprofessional Learning Scale (RIPLS) examined the effectiveness of this innovative educational initiative in an academic setting.

Results

Of the four sub-scales to the RIPLS, the results demonstrated a significant change in the sub-scale of Teamwork and Collaboration (p= 0.035) and in positive professional identity (p= 0.011 among the participants (n = 60). There was no difference in the two remaining sub-scales of negative professional identity or roles and responsibilities.

Conclusion

This Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved study serves as the foundation for future research studies examining transitions to practice, the professional development of novice nurses and strengthening staffing collaboration for a healthy work environment. An interprofessional collaboration exercise was initiated for two semesters between the undergraduate nursing and graduate physical therapy students. During the educational activity, the students were actively engaged in multiple opportunities to practice collaboration, communication, professional identity and roles and teamwork. The collaborative educational activity positively changed the students’ attitude toward teamwork and collaboration and positive role identity and potentially will promote healthy teamwork, communication and respect and role appreciation between these future beside healthcare providers.
Title:
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References:


Abstract Summary:
A pre and post assessment of students’ perceptions using the revised Readiness for Interprofessional Learning Scale (RIPLS) examined teamwork, collaboration and role identity of nursing and physical therapy students in Spring 2017 and 2018. The results demonstrated positive changes in students’ attitudes and perceptions following participation in patient care scenarios.

Content Outline:

Faculty established an interprofessional student educational activity between graduate physical therapy students and undergraduate nursing students in Spring 2017. This educational activity focused on patient care scenarios encompassing safe patient transferring techniques, use of assistive devices and the promotion of interprofessional collaboration. Concurrently, a pilot research study was implemented to survey changes pre and post-participation in students' attitudes in teamwork, collaboration and role identity.

Students completed the revised Readiness for Interprofessional Learning Scale (RIPLS). The revised RIPLS is a 19-item tool with a 5 point scale used to measure the readiness of healthcare students for interprofessional education. The Likert scale range was 1 to 5 with a "1" indicating a strongly disagree rating to a "5" of a strongly agree rating. The tool has four sub-scales: teamwork and collaboration, negative professional identity, positive professional identity and roles and responsibilities. McFadyen & associates (2005) reported the Cronbach’s alpha for teamwork and collaboration as .79/.88, negative professional identity as .60/.76, positive professional identity .76/.81, and roles and responsibilities as .40/.43. The total scale as .84/.89.

Mann-Whitney U tests were calculated with alpha set to 0.05 as a criterion for significance to compare the pre and post question attitude survey after the interprofessional collaborative educational activity. The data revealed significant differences in scores between the participants pre and post educational activity results, \( U = 1963, \ p = .040 \). Data analysis of the four separate subscales revealed significant positive changes in the sub-scales of teamwork and collaboration (\( p =.035 \)) and positive role identity (\( p = .011 \)) after participating in the collaborative interprofessional educational activity. There was no significance difference in attitudes in negative professional identity (0.744) and roles and responsibilities (\( p = .247 \)).

A limitation of this study is related to the pre-educational sample size (\( n= 83 \)) and post-educational sample size (\( n=60 \)). Given this fact, the data in the sub-scales of teamwork and collaboration and positive role identity demonstrated a positive significant change in RIPLS. The overall results indicate the interprofessional educational activity benefited the students' professional growth.

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Author Summary: Dr. Karen Benson has over 40 years of nursing experience in medical surgical and critical care nursing. She has been certified as a CCRN for over 15 years. She has served as nursing faculty at Marymount University in Arlington, Virginia since 2008 as a clinical instructor, lab and simulation instructor and in the classroom. Her special interest is in strengthening student learning for safe patient care and healthy work environments through interprofessional collaboration.

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