

45th Biennial Convention (16-20 November 2019)

Increasing Clinical Judgment by Using Simulation in Associate of Science in Nursing Prepared Students

Christina M. Schilling, MS, RN, CCRN

School of Nursing, Mount Aloysius College, Cresson, PA, USA

Samantha L. Smeltzer, MSN, RN

Department of Nursing, Mount Aloysius College, Cresson, PA, USA

Nurse Educators are tasked with preparing graduate nurses (GN) to care for high acuity patients in the acute care setting. Graduate nurses will need to perform clinical skills safely and competently with appropriate clinical judgment and reasoning. Tanner (2006) defines clinical judgment as an “interpretation or conclusion about a patient’s needs, concerns, or health problems, and/or the decision to take action (or not), use or modify standard approaches, or improvise new ones as deemed appropriate by the patient’s response” (p.204). Graduate nurses rely on their personal knowledge from clinical experiences to help guide their assessment and interventions until new knowledge is gained from experience as a registered nurse. Depending on the students’ clinical assignments, these experiences can vary. Simulated clinical experiences (SCE) are shown to assist the students in developing clinical judgment while still in nursing school (Kim & Kim, 2015; Mahoney, Hancock, Iorianni-Cimbak, & Curley, 2013)

Using simulation, specifically High-fidelity simulation (HFS), has been researched to improve clinical judgment/reasoning in a safe, controlled environment (Lawrence, Messias, & Cason, 2018). HFS allows the student to learn from their mistakes and build clinical judgment skills safely and competently. By creating an SCE which encompasses scenarios of high acuity patient situations, the nursing student will be better equipped to provide safe interventions in the actual acute care setting. Using guidelines providing by the landmark NCSBN National Simulation Study (Hayden, Smiley, Alexander, Kardong-Edgren and Jeffries, 2014) and Simulation the International Nursing Association for Clinical Simulation and Learning (INACSL) Standards of Best Practice: SimulationSM (INACSL, 2016) faculty in an associate degree program redesigned how simulation is used to prepare ASN students for clinical practice and increase the use of HFS throughout the ASN curriculum.

An increase in simulation throughout the ASN curriculum, with a focus of increased simulation in the student’s final semester, demonstrated increased scores on a standardized exam in areas that measure clinical judgment/reasoning. This nationally normed, standardized exam is given to students who have successfully completed all program requirements in the ASN program.

This ongoing study uses the aggregate results related to topic areas that address clinical judgment/reasoning the standardized exam. The standardized exam data were collected each semester, starting in Spring 2017 (N=144 students). An increase in the percentage of scores of items related to clinical judgment/reasoning was noted from 76.7% to 79.9%. Since Spring 2017, students have participated in more simulations throughout the ASN program, especially in their final semester. These results suggest that simulation helps to foster increased clinical judgment in the graduate nurse.

There are some additional variables in this study which should be acknowledged. For example, since spring 2017, the ASN curriculum has been adjusted to increase the number of NCLEX-style questions used in the didactic classroom in the ASN program. Also in Fall 2018, the use of

the “flipped classroom”, as well as increased utilization of case studies, was implemented to attempt to enhance students’ knowledge of new material.

In conclusion, increasing simulation across the ASN program, with emphasis on the final semester, has suggested increased clinical judgment/reasoning scores on a standardized exam. However, further research needs to be conducted to evaluate if the increase has been from increased simulation, or from the teaching/learning activities used in the final of the ASN program.

Title:

Increasing Clinical Judgment by Using Simulation in Associate of Science in Nursing Prepared Students

Keywords:

Clinical Judgment/Reasoning, Nursing Judgment and Simulation

References:

- Gore, T. N., Tanya, L. J., & Wang, C. (2015). Teaching nursing leadership: Comparison of simulation versus traditional inpatient clinical. *International Journal of Nursing Education Scholarship*, 12(1), 1-7. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1515/ijnes-2014-0054>
- Hayden, J. K., Smiley, R. A., Alexander, M., Kardong-Edgren, S., & Jeffries, P. R. (2014). The NCSBN national simulation study: A longitudinal, randomized, controlled study replacing clinical hours with simulation in prelicensure nursing education. *Journal of Nursing Regulation*, 5(2), S3-S64. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2155-8256\(15\)30062-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2155-8256(15)30062-4)
- The INACSL Standards Committee (2016, December). INACSL Standards of Best Practice: SimulationSM: Simulation Design. *Clinical Simulation in Nursing*, Volume 12, S5-S12. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecns.2016.09.005>.
- Kim, J., & Kim, E. J. (2015). Effects of simulation on nursing students’ knowledge, clinical reasoning, and self-confidence: a quasi-experimental study. *Korean Journal of Adult Nursing*, 27(5), 604-611. <https://doi.org/10.7475/kjan.2015.27.5.604>
- Lawrence, K., Messias, D. K., & Cason, M. L. (2018). The influence of simulation experiences on new nurses’ clinical judgement. *Clinical Simulation in Nursing*, 25(C), 22-27. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.encs.2018.10.008>
- Mahoney, A. E., Hancock, L. E., Iorianni-Cimbak, A., & Curley, M. A. (2013). Using high-fidelity simulation to bridge clinical and classroom learning in undergraduate pediatric nursing. *Nurse Education Today*, 33(2013), 648-654. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2012.01.005>
- *Tanner, C. (2006). Thinking like a nurse: a research-based model of clinical judgment in nursing. *Journal of Nursing Education*, 45(6), 204-210.
- *Classic reference

Abstract Summary:

This poster will demonstrate the relationship between the increased number of simulations in an Associate of Science of Nursing (ASN) program, and students’ clinical judgment/reasoning on the on a standardized exam which is taken in the last semester of the ASN program.

Content Outline:

1. Literature review to support that simulation increases clinical judgment in nursing students.
2. Program data supporting an increase in clinical judgment/reasoning due to the increase in the simulation.
3. The importance of developing simulations to increase clinical judgment/reasoning in nursing curricula.

First Primary Presenting Author

Primary Presenting Author

Christina M. Schilling, MS, RN, CCRN
Mount Aloysius College
School of Nursing
Instructor of Nursing
Cresson PA
USA

Author Summary: Instructor of Nursing at Mount Aloysius College where I am the Level 4 Coordinator for the Associate Degree in Science of Nursing. Graduate of Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Member of AACN and the Greater Johnstown Chapter of AACN

Second Author

Samantha L. Smeltzer, MSN, RN
Mount Aloysius College
Department of Nursing
Nursing Resource & Simulation Center Coordinator
Cresson PA
USA

Author Summary: Nursing Resource & Simulation Center (NRSC) Coordinator responsible for the leadership of the NRSC as it relates to fostering quality skills practice/remediation and the curricular and educational components of the simulation experience for students. Nursing faculty with a strong foundation in Curriculum development and evaluation; Instructional design; Principles of teaching and learning; Technology Professional; Simulation. Highly skilled career professional with more than 15 years of experience in progressive care, ambulatory surgery, and home health environments.