The Challenges of Teaching Social Skills and Teamwork in Engaging iGen Generation of Nursing Students

Akhtar Ebrahim Ghassemi, Ph.D., MHC, MSN, RN, Associate Professor; Marie Basha, DNP, RN

Introduction

iGen nursing students learning styles and expectations are very different from earlier generations (Oandasan et al., 2006; Philip & Garcia, 2013). Academic professors should foster active learning at require collaborative work during experiential learning. To develop teamwork and social learning skills it is crucial to utilize the latest technology, an audiovisual rich learning environment, for these students.

Teamwork is firmly on the agenda of a range of people working in health and social care and calls for greater commitment towards integrated care. Increasingly, health care professionals are being asked to coordinate and manage health care delivery services and manage service-users total care, regardless of their traditional role and locational boundaries. Therefore, individual professionals or practitioners are continually faced with the dual challenges of relying on their own knowledge and skills while understanding and entering into the work of other professionals, which unavoidably means developing new team relationships and ways of working.

Significance in Nursing

As nurse educators and nursing professionals embrace teamwork as an essential element in delivering patient-centered care, they need to take a proactive stance in fostering social skills, teamwork, and the value of interprofessional collaboration in educating and training new generation of nurses.

As modern healthcare is delivered by multidisciplinary healthcare teams who rely on effective communication and teamwork to safeguard effective and safe patient care, nurses in all practice areas have numerous opportunities to use their interpersonal skills to engage in collaboration and teamwork. However, some challenges exist in healthcare environment and educational systems.

Purpose

1) to explore educational challenges to the development of effective healthcare teams
2) to suggest some educational strategies to improve nursing students’ understanding of the principles of teamwork during their course work
3) to help students understand other healthcare professionals’ role and perspectives
4) to assist students to develop specific communication strategies

Teaching Strategies

- Utilize the latest technology to deliver active learning strategies to iGen nursing students
- Include audio-visually rich learning, and innovative teaching strategies in the academic environment
- Design multitasking challenges which require collaborative work during experiential learning
- Offer instant or prompt feedback
- Recognize that the current literature shows that today’s learners frequently do not take responsibility for their own development or failure, thus it is imperative to engage iGen students using multiple teaching modalities.

Questions to Ponder

- Nursing Education: Teaching social skills
  - How to develop social skills
  - How to develop organizational skills
  - How to climatize to collegiate life
- Healthcare Delivery: Teaching Teamwork
  - How to achieve patient teaching outcomes as a member of a multidisciplinary team
  - How to develop communication strategies
- Challenges for Teaching iGen Students
  - How to work effectively with the members of healthcare team
  - How to engage students in working together with understanding of principles of teamwork
  - How to incorporate teaching strategies in didactic and clinical teaching
  - How to incorporate interprofessional education in the curriculum

Selected References
