PURPOSE: This innovative clinical education project sought to facilitate student development of clinical judgment skills through utilization of a new tool across the clinical curriculum.

BACKGROUND: Clinical judgment is essential to nursing practice, but student development of clinical reasoning processes necessary to make judgments in the context of client care does not occur by chance. Nursing faculty seek to facilitate student development of clinical judgment, but how often are we successful?

METHODS: Following an extensive review of the literature and brainstorming, a needs assessment included course coordinators, adjunct clinical faculty and students from all levels of the undergraduate baccalaureate nursing program during open stakeholder meetings. An innovative clinical teaching technique was developed and implemented with undergraduate nursing students beginning in the first clinical course. Faculty and students used a three-level clinical teaching and learning tool designed to foster clinical judgment through an intentional, progressive process and facilitate deeper discussions and reflective thinking within the context of clinical client care situations. Students and faculty identified development of clinical judgment skills using Laster’s Clinical Judgment Rubric. When students progressed to new clinical environments or no longer demonstrated mastery of an upper level, faculty guided students to revisit prior levels and achieve confidence and mastery of that level before progressing to subsequent levels.

DISCUSSION: Students reported that the Clinical Teaching and Learning Tool helped them “think about thinking” to discover patient problems and make connections, set priorities, and develop an interdisciplinary plan of care that honored the patient’s needs. Clinical faculty reported greater ease in teaching clinical judgment during the clinical experience and identified student progression of clinical judgement skills from one clinical experience to the subsequent semester across the clinical curriculum.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Use of an innovative clinical teaching and learning tool provides faculty and students with resources to enhance the clinical teaching and learning experience to focus on progressive development of clinical judgment skills to better prepare nursing students for real world clinical practice.
Keywords:
Clinical Judgment, Clinical Teaching & Learning and Faculty & Student Development

References:


Abstract Summary:
Clinical teaching and learning was reimagined using a new progressive tool along with instructional strategies, to provide guidance to faculty and students in the development of clinical judgment skills within patient care environments.

Content Outline:
I. Introduction
A. Clinical teaching and learning techniques lack imagine and limit student development of clinical judgment
B. Clinical faculty need support in development teaching and learning strategies to support student development of clinical judgment

II. Body
A. Clinical teaching for clinical judgment
1. Just-in-time clinical teaching opportunities
   a) intentional opportunities to engage students in reflective thinking while in the context of client care
   b) supportive strategies to facilitate noticing, interpreting, responding, and reflecting (Tanner, 2006)
2. Structured reflection
   a) incorporate reflective questioning and supportive dialogue to enhance student problem-solving and clinical reasoning processes to facilitate clinical judgment
   b) use of Socratic questioning to seek clarity, probe for deeper understanding or justification for recommended course of action
B. Clinical learning for clinical judgment
1. Heid ATE Guide for Clinical Teaching and Learning – a progressive, iterative approach to development of clinical thinking allowing for movement across levels as student ability developments across clinical environments
   a) Level One: Making Connections Moving Beyond Data Collection
   b) Level Two: Clinical Prioritization Guide
   c) Level Three: Putting it All Together Concept Map
2. Peer to peer huddles
   a) peer dyads for clinical learning and idea sharing
   b) huddles to deepen thinking and plan/prioritize/evaluate patient care
C. Evaluation of clinical teaching and learning for clinical judgment
1. Application of Lasater’s Clinical Judgment Rubric
   a) student self-rating using LCJR
   b) faculty rating of student using LCJR
2. Planning for continued growth and development of clinical judgment
   a) faculty-student formative discussion regarding student progression of clinical judgment using LCJR
   b) collaborative discussion and planning for next steps in development clinical judgment and recognition of differences as student progresses to other courses, patient populations and clinical settings

III. Conclusion
A. Clinical faculty develop teaching strategies and assisted by the Heid ATE Guide for Clinical Teaching and Learning Recommendations for Use
B. Students provided structured, iterative, progressive process for the development of clinical judgment within the context of patient care environments. Includes peer learning opportunities and clinical faculty facilitation.

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