An Innovative Approach to a Capstone Course

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Objectives

- Apply the recommendations of the Carnegie Foundation study into a capstone course within the context of nursing students’ pediatric experience
- Integrate the recommendations with constructivist learning theory to foster clinical reasoning and professional formation
Carnegie Foundation Study Results

- Education to Practice Gap
- Lack of consistency with multiple entry levels
- Ineffective communication and interaction with the interdisciplinary team

Benner, Sutphen, Leonard, & Day, 2010
Carnegie Foundation Study
Recommendations

- Integrate concepts related to liberal arts
- Foster development of clinical reasoning and ethical comportment

Benner et al., 2010
Carnegie Foundation Study
Recommendations

- Learn in the context of the situation
- Integrate classroom and clinical learning
- Develop clinical reasoning and multiple ways of thinking
- Develop professional formation

Benner et al., 2010
Capstone Course

- Keystone of learning
- Strengthen the student’s abilities
- Opportunity to link the classroom learning to clinical learning

Schroetter & Wendler, 2008
Constructivist Learning

- Cultural-Historical theory
- Social environment and culture impact learning
- Zone of Proximal Development
- Behavior results from higher mental processes

Cole, John-Steiner, Scriber, & Souderman, 1977
Proposed Capstone Course

- Weaves the Carnegie Foundation recommendations into the context of a pediatric clinical experience
- Opportunity for a student to compare and contrast pathophysiology in the care of a child with complex endocrine diagnosis
Capstone Course

- RN Preceptor
- Collaborates with faculty to guide the student’s achievement of course objectives
- Models the reasoning process
- Promotes insight to facilitate student learning
Situated Cognition

- Pediatric endocrine focus
- Contrast Type 1 diabetes to hyperinsulism
- Respond to various parameters of blood sugar
- Decision tree for options: oral glucose, nasogastic feeding, intravenous support
Integration of Theory into the Clinical Environment

- Theoretical concepts
- Contrast complex pathophysiology
- Utilize therapeutic communication
- Apply child developmental theory
- Enhance technical competence
Develop Clinical Reasoning

- Thinking
- Interacts with members of the interdisciplinary team
- Learns multiple ways of thinking
- Gains thoughtful insight
- Integrates scientific knowledge and evidence based practice to deliver the most appropriate intervention
Integrate Ethical Comportment

- Ethical decisions
- Gains insight of the ethical decisions confronting the medical and nursing profession
- Participates in discussion with families regarding decisions relating to their child undergoing a pancreatectomy as a life saving surgery for hyperinsulism
Professional Formation

- Integrates behaviors consistent with a sense of ethical and moral reasoning
- Excludes technical competence as the only essential essential behavior
- Applies the latest evidence to the care of their patients with electronic learning

Benner et al., 2010; Sasikarn, Isaramalai & Pohthong, 2010
Professional Formation

- Interacts with members of the interdisciplinary team
- Gains insight into decisions made on the endocrine unit through exposure to various patient scenarios
- Engages in the profession by making a commitment to lifelong learning
Group Process

- Seminars
  - Share experiences
  - Use simulations to reenact patient scenarios
  - Grow professionally in a non threatening atmosphere
Clinical Evaluation

- Clinical judgment
  - Reflective journaling
  - Discussion of thought processes that contribute to clinical decision making
  - Discover misconceptions

Lasater & Neilson, 2009
Nursing Education Implications

- Recommend consistency in entry level course requirements
- Develop learning strategies that foster clinical reasoning skills in the student throughout the curriculum
- Build relationships between educational and service communities
Thank You

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References

- Available upon Request
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