



Faculty STEP to Improve Thinking

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Disclosures (or lack thereof)

- Sally Vliem is a Master Faculty Specialist at Western Michigan University
- Lisa Singleterry is an Assistant Professor at Western Michigan University
- We have no conflict of interest and have not been sponsored or given commercial support

Objectives

- Discuss the necessity of clinical judgment skills for the NextGEN NCLEX-RN
- Describe an educational strategy to improve critical thinking
- Describe changes to STEP since the first iteration

Background and Significance

- Importance of clinical reasoning on NexGen NCLEX-RN (Dickison, et al. 2019)
- Faculty can implement strategies to strengthen clinical judgment of students (Cassum, et al. 2015; Cook, et al. 2019; Oliver, et al. 2018).
- Students need time to think (Cassum, et al. 2015)

Specific Aim of QI Project

- To raise clinical judgment scores on the Assessment Technology Institute (ATI) tests taken by senior nursing students using evidenced based teaching strategies

Methods

- Standardized Testing Education Program (STEP) initiated
- Senior level students invited to participate
- Ten 30-minute sessions were offered during fall and spring semesters
- Teaching strategies included
 - *Brief sessions*
 - *Socratic questioning*
 - *Faculty dyad dialogue to model reasoning*

Session Topics

- Preparing for nursing exams
- Types of NCLEX questions
- Test taking strategies
- Prioritization
- Pharmacology
- Eliminating options
- Study skills
- Delegation questions
- Communication questions
- Reducing test anxiety

Three ATI Tests

Pre-SteP	Nursing Care of Children
During STEP	Medical Surgical Nursing
Post STEP	Comprehensive Predictor

Results

- 39/77 (51%) senior level students participated in 1 or more sessions
- SPSS 24 used for data analysis
- Independent sample *t* tests were used to examine differences in critical thinking scores for those who participated in STEP and those who did not

Results

- Nursing Care of Children

Step Attendance	Mean CT Scores	Significance
No (N=38)	$M=62.54$ $SD=9.78$	$p=.003$
Yes (N=39)	$M=56.46$ $SD=7.45$	

Results

- Medical Surgical ATI

Step Attendance	Mean CT Scores	Significance
No (N=37)	<i>M</i> =66.43 <i>SD</i> =10.02	<i>p</i> =.06
Yes (N=40)	<i>M</i> =62.28 <i>SD</i> =9.52	

Results

- Comprehensive Predictor

Step Attendance	Mean CT Scores	Significance
No (N=38)	$M=71.40$ $SD=8.46$	$p=.31$
Yes (N=40)	$M=69.50$ $SD=7.92$	

Discussion

- Faculty development in teaching strategies that promote thinking is important
- Peer support and collaboration is essential
- Administrative support is crucial
- Faculty not involved in the development of STEP are encouraging students to attend the sessions

Limitations

- Not all students who struggled on examinations attended
- Not all students attended all sessions

Next STEPS

- STEP 1 initiated for students in the junior year
- STEP 2 continues for students in the senior year

STEP 1	STEP 2
Preparing for nursing exams Types of NCLEX questions	Test-taking strategies
Test-taking strategies	Prioritization questions
Study skills	Pharmacology
Reducing test anxiety	Eliminating options

References

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