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Title: Increasing Emotional Intelligence in Nursing Leaders Through a Dedicated Training Program

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ACCEPTED

Session Title: Meet the Poster Authors Session

Slot: PST: Friday, March 27, 2020: 2:30 PM-3:15 PM

Abstract Describes: Completed Work/Project

Applicable Category: Clinical, Academic, Students, Leaders

Keywords: emotional intelligence, innovation and leadership

Abstract Summary:

This presentation highlights the importance of emotional intelligence in nurses and describes a pilot study designed to enhance emotional intelligence in nurse practitioner students. The pilot study (n=43) demonstrated that emotional intelligence traits such as flexibility, stress tolerance, optimism, and decision making showed statistically significant increases over the year-long intervention.

References:

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Abstract Text:

Purpose: With the increasing demand on nurses to perform in leadership roles, it is essential that schools of nursing prepare graduates with leadership skills that will enhance communication and the ability to lead teams. This presentation will discuss the importance of emotional intelligence in nurses and describe a pilot study designed to enhance emotional intelligence in graduate nursing students.

Methods: Emotional intelligence (EI) is defined as a set of skills that enhance the ability to regulate emotion, communicate effectively, and use feelings to motivate, strategize and achieve in life. It is recognized that emotional intelligence may play a vital role in the success of healthcare professionals, though EI skills are not commonly taught in undergraduate or graduate nursing curriculum. The presentation discusses the implementation of a pilot project within a nurse practitioner (NP) program over 15 months to assess student emotional intelligence before and after the intervention. Students in various NP programs (n=43) signed the informed consent and completed the emotional quotient inventory (EQ-I 2.0©) at baseline. Emotional intelligence training included three in-person and one online session designed to increase student awareness of leadership strengths and weaknesses, along with improving communication and leadership skills. Topics discussed included effective communication, working in teams, addressing healthcare burnout, and navigating challenging relationships and conversations in the workplace. At the end of the intervention period, close to graduation, students repeated the EQ-I 2.0© assessment. The data was evaluated for change over time in multiple emotional intelligence traits.

Results: The pre-post study of 43 graduate nurses showed that emotional intelligence traits including flexibility, stress tolerance, optimism, and decision making showed statistically significant increases from baseline to post-intervention ($p < 0.05$).

Conclusion: Leadership skills, including emotional intelligence, are a key component to success as a nursing professional. Most nursing programs do not include emotional intelligence assessment or training. This presentation will discuss an effective intervention that can promote the development of leadership and EI skills in graduate nursing students. It is essential that schools of nursing consider practical methods of implementing leadership training into curriculum.