BSN Students Collaborate with Rural Community Hospital in Quality Improvement Project: Hand Hygiene Compliance

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Project
Students are required at the Senior level in Nursing Management course to implement the concepts of quality improvement and patient safety. Compliance of hand hygiene practices can improve patient health care outcomes and improve the quality of care. Students collected data through standardized observations via the mobile application iScrub. Students worked collaboratively with members of the Quality Initiatives Resource Department at a rural hospital in collecting data during their clinical rotations. Students were also involved at the ground-level in aiding to identify the problem through poster presentations.

Purpose
The purpose of this descriptive, observational study is:

1) To determine if healthcare professionals are consistently compliant with hand hygiene when caring for patients on multiple units.
2) To teach students the role and importance of Quality Improvement in improving patient health outcomes.

Results

Student Recommendations

- Increase handwashing sinks of the units.
- Educational Workshops.
- Implement the use of a motion activated system that chimes to remind staff to perform hand hygiene.
- Alcohol-based hand wash that is not irritating or drying to the skin.
- Implement incentive and reward systems.

Benefits of Strategy

- Students learned the importance of collaboration with other health care professionals in Quality Improvement.
- Students participated in evidenced-based research.
- Students helped to identify potential problems in handwashing practices.
- Students were able to apply what they learned to their own clinical practice experiences.
- A long-term benefit of this study is the provision of patient safety and positive healthcare outcomes.

Implications

- This teaching-learning strategy allowed the students to experience collaborative evidenced-based research and how it plays an important role in healthcare.
- Concepts learned in this course will enhance the student’s professional practice.
- By increasing hand hygiene compliance/practices, health care professionals can decrease the incidence of nosocomial infections, improve patient care, decrease health care costs and provide safe care.

Limitations

- Two students were unable to access the iScrub application because they owned Droid mobile devices therefore, they collected handwritten data.

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