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Curbside Consultation for the Nurse Practitioner: Qualitative Inquiry for Education, Policy, and Practice

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Purpose:

Nursing is not alone in the quest for inter-professional collaboration. Society is leaning in on the principals of promoting team science and using shared experience and expertise to promote health. The World Health Organization Framework for Action on Inter-professional Education and Collaborative Practice acknowledged that inter-professional work is a way for professionals to learn with and from one another to improve quality care and occurs when multiple clinicians from various backgrounds collaborate to address healthcare needs. Fundamentally, the individual experience of peers is a respected knowledge source, and the unplanned social exchanges and expertise of peers is used by nurse practitioners (NPs) to make clinical decisions. NPs use curbside consultation (CC) to provide quality care with high patient satisfaction. However, little regarding CC, a commonly used decision-making aid for NPs is understood. NPs frequently use CC, defined as pursuing information or recommendation regarding patient care without request for formal consultation, to provide patient care. Research and education concerning CC among nurse practitioners is lacking. Given NPs commonly exchange and seek advice concerning patient care by using CC, the purpose of this study was to obtain an understanding of NPs perceptions of interpersonal aspects of the CC process to inform NPs clinical practice and education

Methods:

Qualitative descriptive design and inductive content analysis to interview twenty primary care and specialty care NPs recruited using purposive sampling for conduct of individual interviews.

Results:

Content analysis identified themes describing interpersonal components of the CC process. NPs practiced in collaboration with physicians in variable roles within primary care and specialty care settings. These collaborations varied dependent upon supervisory relationships with physicians. Additional themes concerned NPs professional experience and the desired characteristics of experts for CC. These characteristics included NPs perceptions of colleague experience and expertise, trust, and interpersonal relationship dynamics.

Conclusion:

CC processes for NPs are multidimensional, including interpersonal themes as components of this communication exchange. Given CC is a resource highly utilized for NPs, further inquiry is critical for understanding of its implications for NP practice, policy and education internationally.

Title:

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Keywords:

clinical decision-making, curbside consultation and nurse practitioner

Abstract Summary:

Curbside Consultation is a multidimensional process used by nurse practitioners for clinical decision-making in multiple settings. Given that Curbside Consultation is a highly utilized resource among nurse practitioners, further understanding of processes utilized for Curbside Consultation among nurse practitioners is critical for application to nurse practitioner practice, policy, and education.

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