Implementation of Specialty Nursing Education in Guyana

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Purpose:
Implementation of a nursing residency program will serve to advance the specialty of emergency nursing in Guyana. This initiative focuses on building a sustainable curriculum producing the highest quality emergency nurses with enhanced understanding of the fundamentals of critical patient care. When confronted with overwhelming numbers of patients and some of the highest trauma, suicide, and maternal/fetal mortality rates in the world, specialty nursing education is especially important in low resource settings where there are few specialty trained physicians (Forget et al., 2013). It has a transformational effect on patient outcomes, care team dynamics, and the promotion of quality improvement and evidence-based practice. Further, it decreases burnout, improves nursing retention and promotes engagement (Sabanciogullari & Dogan, 2015; Van Camp & Chappy, 2017).

Methods:
Nurses in our organization designed an emergency nursing residency program modeled after the Emergency Nurses Association curriculum (Hoyt & Selfridge-Thomas, 2007). The curriculum highlights the fundamental principles of critical care patient triage, prioritization, stabilization, and resuscitation. We then worked to build upon decade old partnerships with university, public hospital, and officials within the Ministry of Public Health in Guyana, South America to implement this Bachelor’s degree conferring curriculum (Forget et al., 2013). The curriculum’s delivery was modeled after traditional physician residency programs as well as our own Medical Center nurse residency program. Candidates for this degree must meet its 2-year academic didactic requirements in tandem with clinical experiences and procedural competencies. A committed faculty of emergency and critical care nurse faculty travel to Guyana 14 days each month to provide didactic and clinical teaching as well as professional mentorship. An inaugural class of 21 nurses began in November 2016. The program recently enrolled its fourth intake of nurses in Fall 2019.

Results:
The first class graduated in Nov. 2018 with subsequent classes enrolled annually. The program boasts a 100% pass rate in both basic and advanced cardiac life support. Nearly 56% of the emergency department nursing staff are current or recent program graduates. Nurse driven quality improvement initiatives focused on handwashing compliance, resuscitation documentation, and medication administration and patient safety (Van Meter et al., 2019; Van Meter et al., 2019). Recent graduates were successful in submitting their abstracts to the Guyana National Scientific Conference and were the first nurses granted a podium presentation for original research.

Conclusion:
Implementation of the emergency nursing residency program created a platform for advanced nursing skills, facilitated the development of professional practice standards, and introduced the foundations for nurse driven continuing evidence-based practice initiatives both in the Accident and Emergency Department and throughout the hospital. These opportunities have expanded the scope of practice for nurses in Guyana.

Title:
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Keywords:
curriculum development, emergency nursing and specialty education

Abstract Summary:
Emergency nurses designed and implemented specialty nursing education in Guyana, South America. The curriculum emphasizes the fundamentals of emergency nursing triage, assessment, and resuscitation. This 2-year program consists of didactic and clinical education. Graduates receive a Bachelor’s Degree in Emergency Nursing, the first of its kind in the world.

References:

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