The Perception of Staff Nurses on the Clinical Experience of the BSN Student Before and After the Implementation of a Dedicated Education Unit

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The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the views of staff nurses on BSN student nurse experiences before and after the implementation of a Dedicated Education Unit (DEU).
Learning Objective 1: The learner will be able to identify perceived differences in student behavior before and after the implementation of a DEU.

Learning Objective 2: The learner will be able to describe staff nurses experiences while participating in the role as clinical instructor.
Guiding this study will be the theoretical framework of Albert Bandura, which is a social cognitive theory that combines behaviorist and cognitive elements. The assumptions of this behaviorist orientation describe that learning will demonstrate a change in behavior, the environment shapes behavior, and the learned behavior needs to be reinforced.
Believing in the Culture of Education

The Oncology Nursing Unit prides itself on Team Spirit and Continued Nursing Excellence. During Annual Employee Evaluations, educational enhancement and avenues to achieve such is discussed. Each nurse sets yearly goals towards further Nursing Education and Certification in their specialty.

This year twelve employees from the Oncology Unit graduated from different institutions with degrees in Nursing. Three Nursing Unit Secretaries graduated with degrees, four RN’s received BSN degrees and five RN’s received MSN/APN degrees.

A grand celebration was held in the hospital’s medical office building with physicians, hospital administration, families and friends in attendance. Each graduate was given a plaque and an award for their achievements.

Celebrating employee’s achievements energizes them and fosters professional pride and also makes them feel valued by their organization. Celebrating employees motivates them to continuously strive for excellence and also motivates others to do so.

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What is a DEU?

The Dedicated Education Unit (DEU) is a clinical setting that is developed into an optimal teaching/learning environment through the collaborative efforts of nurses, health care team members, management and faculty. It is designed to provide students with a positive clinical learning environment that maximizes the achievement of student learning outcomes by using proven teaching/learning strategies and by capitalizing on the expertise of both clinicians and faculty. Students are integrated into the workplace in a way that allows them to be an integral part of the workflow and culture so they experience a realistic picture of nursing practice. At the same time the DEU provides an opportunity for clinicians to stay fresh and motivated in their roles as mentors and role models, and a way for faculty to remain grounded in current clinical reality.

University of Portland
The Portland Model
Background

**Current and future nursing shortage**
- In the next 20 years there will be a deficit of over 1 million RN’s which is a 20% vacancy rate (Perrine, 2009)

**Relationship of the shortage to the current workforce**
- The # of nurses leaving will outpace the # entering the profession Buerhouse, Stager & Auerbach (2009)
- 2 will leave for 1 entering (Martin & Tulgen, 2007)
- 40-60% over the age of 40 will retire by 2021 (Duvall & Andrews, 2010)
Background

- **Impact of shortage to society**
  - Fewer experienced nurses to care for the acutely ill

- **Current structure of clinical learning**
  - 1 instructor for up to 10 students
  - Many students have 6 hour clinical experiences
  - Instructors may rotate through several hospitals thus needing to understand several computer systems
Literature describes the importance the experienced staff nurse, serving as a mentor, had on the student learning experience (Yonge, Myrick, Furguson & Lughana, 2005).

A lack of true mentoring is one reason nurses leave the profession (Boychuk-Duchscher & Cowin, 2004).
Rationale for the Study

- Current literature indicates that an “estimated 30%-50% of all new RN’s elect either to change positions or leave nursing completely within the first 3 years of clinical practice (AACN, 2003; Aiken, Clarke, Sloane Sochalski & Silber 2002; Cipriano, 2006; Cowin & Hengstberger-Sims, 2006, as cited in MacKusick and Minick, 2010, p. 235).

- Student nurses have also reported that staff nurses are resistive to students providing care to patients however, this perception has been reported to improve when there is a partnership between the student and the staff nurse (Dean, Reishtein, McVey, Ambrose, Burke, Haskins & Jones, 2013).
Rationale for the Study

- Nursing students who have completed a clinical experience using a DEU model have expressed a greater satisfaction with their clinical experience as well as an improvement in their clinical skills (Glazer, Erickson, Mylott, Mulready-Shick, & Banister, 2011).

- Staff nurses are more satisfied in their role when they take an active part in the clinical preparation of student nurses (Rush, Peel, & McCracken, 2004).
Methodology

Qualitative: Case Study

Observations
- Took place between the staff nurses not actively involved with the DEU

Focus groups
- Allowed for discussion between each group of nurses.
  - One focus group with those actively involved in the DEU
  - One focus group with those nurses not actively participating in the DEU
- Semi structured format

Consents
- Obtained prior to data collection
- Confidentiality
- Staff was not identified and audiotapes and transcripts were kept in a locked file
Data Analysis

Data was analyzed by reviewing the transcripts, recordings and personal notes.

- **First cycle coding - Values coding**
  Reflects a person's values, attitudes or beliefs, representing their personal values or worldviews (Saldana, 2009)

- **Second cycle coding - Pattern coding**
  Describes an emergent theme – used when examining social networks or patterns of human relationships
Results

Themes

Student Clinical Interaction with patients

Student Clinical experiences

Communication between students and patients

Communication between students and nursing staff

Impact to Nursing Staff
Student Clinical Interactions with patients

Pre DEU: Reluctance to remain with the patient
Post DEU: More quality time was spent with the patient
Pre DEU: More formal in their approach
Post DEU: More relaxed

Student Clinical Experiences

Pre DEU: Did not seek out additional clinical experience
Post DEU: Approached the nursing staff to either observe or participate in nursing procedures
Discussion

Communication between students and patients

Pre DEU: Completed verbal tasks, short sentences, appeared to constantly be looking for the “correct” word
Post DEU: More relaxed communication, more fact finding, able to gather more data
Pre DEU: Formal, stiff in their communication style
Post DEU: Affect more relaxed, able to talk on the same level as the patient

Communication between students and nursing staff

Pre DEU: Limited Interactions
Post DEU: Sought out the staff, as the semester progressed students became comfortable enough to seek out staff not directly involved in the DEU
Discussion

Impact to Nursing Staff

- Became empowered in the educational process
- Participated in student learning experiences
- Felt they had the ability to “grow” the profession
- Gained professional development tools
- Took responsibility for student learning
- Recognized the importance of Benner’s model of Novice to Expert
- Experienced some of the difficulties that student’s experienced, i.e., putting theory into practice
- Learned about themselves and how they can impact student learning
Limitations

- The size of the study
  - One nursing unit in one hospital

- Length of the Study
  - Over 1 semester

- Specific geographic location
  - Would the findings be different in another area of the country?
Conclusions

- Participation in a DEU has benefits for both students and nursing staff
- There are cost considerations that need to be determined
- Numbers of students per shift per unit needs to be limited
- Staff needs to be trained in educational principles
When we enter society at birth, we receive an inheritance from the people who lived before us. It is our responsibility to augment that inheritance for those who succeed us. I feel that all of us owe the world more than we received when we were born.

An Wang
1920-1990

We can be a part of the future of nursing.
References


References


