Creating and Sustaining Education and Practice Synergy on a Dedicated Education Unit

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DEUs
Background and Previous Research

Dedicated Education Unit (DEU)

- Potential Benefits
  - Best use of faculty and staff nurse expertise
  - Culture of learning on a stable placement site
  - Enrollment capacity potentially increased

Literature Review

- Focus on satisfaction
- Students, clinical instructors, and faculty studied collectively
Problem
- Faculty members’ engagement is pivotal to a DEU’s success, yet their experiences had not been deeply studied.

Purpose
- To describe, interpret, and offer insight into the meanings of the lived experiences of nursing faculty in DEUs across several baccalaureate programs.

Research Question
- What is the meaning and significance of the lived experience of being a faculty member on a Dedicated Education Unit used for pre-licensure baccalaureate nursing education?
Participants and Approach

Participants
- Eight faculty from seven schools in four U.S. geographic divisions

Data Generation Approach
- Phenomenology; Max van Manen (1990)
- Demographic questionnaire and audio-recorded interviews

Analysis Approach
- Colaizzi (1978). Ongoing analysis with data generation

Ensuring Trustworthiness
- Member checking, debriefing, audit trail (Guba, 1981)
- Participants previously unknown to researcher
Themes

Analysis revealed 3 themes:

– Preparing
– Adapting
– Sustaining

Subthemes of Sustaining:

– Supporting Clinical Instructors as Teachers
– Supporting Student Learning
– Supporting DEU Processes
– Supporting Nursing Practice
Creating Synergy

Preparing
  – Involvement of key stakeholders

Adapting
  – New faculty life worlds
Sustaining Synergy: Subthemes 1 and 2

Supporting Clinical Instructors as Teachers
  – Advising them about best practices for giving student feedback
  – Guiding them in fostering critical thinking

Supporting Student Learning
  – Giving of self in new ways
  – Managing struggling students
Sustaining Synergy: Subthemes 3 and 4

Supporting DEU Processes
- Evaluating and improving processes
- Managing day-to-day problems

Supporting Nursing Practice
- Sharing EBP knowledge
- Tactfully dealing with Clinical Instructor or DEU practice issues
Summary

Strategies for Success:

– Proactively foster CI development.
– Intentionally connect with students.
– Recognize the importance of ongoing purposeful evaluation.
– Determine when to intervene to support both education and nursing practice.
Implications for Nursing Education

Identification of best practices for:

– **Faculty engagement on the DEU**
  - With the staff nurse clinical instructors
  - With the nursing students
  - With leaders within the health care organization

– **Evaluation of a DEU**
  - Student learning outcomes
  - Staff nurse clinical instructor development
  - Organizational or unit practice initiatives
