Designing and implementing a social media based “case of the month” module in a neuro critical care unit.

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BACKGROUND

• Time constraints and challenging ICU staffing models add to the complexity of developing and establishing a successful nurse education program
• Web-based programs offer the promise to bridge the current resource gap and have the added advantage to improve self-directed and asynchronous learning.1
• Emerging data shows that a superior educated nursing workforce has a positive impact on reducing mortality of patients in the ICU.2,3
• In our IRB approved study, we describe our pilot project experience in successfully implementing a case learning discussion centered on Neuro Critical Care using a password protected, institution specific online platform called Freeform (https://freeform.vanderbilt.edu).

SPECIFIC AIM

To study the feasibility and effect of implementing an online discussion forum for complex case based discussions for nurses in a busy Neuroscience ICU

METHODS

Needs assessment:

• An anonymous, education needs survey was sent out to approximately 70 Neuro ICU nurses at our institution.

Survey results:

• Total of 39 responses
  o 9 of 39 worked in the NCU for < 1 year
  o 15 of 39 worked in the NCU between 2-5 years
  o 7 of 39 worked > 5 years in the NCU
• 19 of 39 (48%) responded No to the question “Did your Nursing School training prepare you WELL for your work in the Neuro ICU?”
• Most frequently requested learning topics:
  o Advanced hemodynamic monitoring
  o Crisis scenario management
  o Bedside procedures (echocardiography, bronchoscopy etc.)
  o Neuromuscular disorders

VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT (VLE) OR WEB BASED PLATFORM:

• Freeform is a password protected, institution specific online platform that is web based and mobile enabled.
• The functionality and look of Freeform is loosely based on the user experiences of Facebook.
• We created the “All things NeuroCritical Care” page to allow collaborative, asynchronous and real time learning experiences for the nursing staff on all things pertaining to neurosciences.

EDUCATIONAL CONTENT

• Content development was a collaborative effort between the core team of intensivists, an ACNP, and an experienced RN.
• Each month a clinical vignette with one to three questions was posted. Cases were presented with visual data (CT, MRI, etc.).
• The nursing staff had approximately five days to respond to the posted questions and introduce discussion questions as well.
• At the conclusion of the case a recent peer reviewed article pertaining to the topic was posted.

RESULTS

• Currently 39 of 72 nurses formally follow the page, with over 100 unique visitors to the page.
• There have been 84 responses to questions and discussion points posted, and 70 comments posted to various scenarios

DISCUSSION

• Our pilot was successful in developing an online presence and attempted to fulfill an unmet curricular need that incorporated an innovative approach.
• Through the use of higher order questioning, the education forum can be used to encourage critical thinking skills as well.
• We found that while most participants logged into the forum, a significant percentage of viewers did not post any comments. The reasons included:
  o Being self-conscious
  o Apprehension of being wrong
  o Unclear about who else was online in the forum including supervisors and attending physicians
• Feedback to date has been extremely positive and the nursing staff continues to request future topics for discussion.
• Next step: Enhance engagement by incorporating continuing education credits (CE) into the current platform.

CONCLUSION

• Our single center pilot project was successful in creating an online case based learning discussion platform for our Neuroscience ICU.
• Web based case discussions can be a viable learning strategy for busy critical care units.

REFERENCES