ABSTRACT

Information technology (IT) and mobile devices have become a part of most everyone’s daily lives both personally and professionally. IT and mobile devices, such as cellular telephones, personal digital assistants (PDAs), and tablets, permit quick and easy access to vast amounts of information. With this in mind, it is understandable that international nursing organizations, including the International Council of Nurses (ICN) and Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing (STTI), and many national nurses associations (NNAs), have written Position Statements calling for the integration of information technology into nursing curriculums from as far back as 1997. Nursing programs have begun to follow the above-mentioned directives to incorporate Information Technology, and the use of mobile devices, in teaching nursing students how obtain and utilize up-to-date information necessary for patient care.

STRATEGIES TO MAKE USING MOBILE TECHNOLOGIES WORK

- Increase IT support from the suppliers and from university-based IT departments
- Introduce Mobile Technology early in the curriculum, for example, in Informatics courses
- Integrate the use of Mobile Technology throughout the curriculum
- Explore options that will produce more grant funding
- Purchase the applications in bulk to reduce cost
- Reduce the amount of duplication of materials that students are required to purchase
- Provide additional training for the nursing faculty to enhance faculty’s familiarity with mobile technology
- Members of the faculty can be identified as “super-users” to increase “buy-in” and “role-modeling” by faculty
- Developing specific assignments and/or activities involving the use of mobile technology, that can be implemented by the nursing faculty will also be most helpful.
- Specific assignments might include
  - Asking the students clinical questions which could be looked up on their PDAs
  - Permit students to use Mobile Technology during certain exams, for example, Case Study Exams
  - Use of the “Clinical Preparation Tool” consisting of case studies that require use of Mobile Technology to formulate answers
  - Scavenger Hunts
  - The use of Mobile Technology in “flipped classrooms” and “group projects”
- Conversations can be held with the clinical organizations to resolve their reluctance to permit the use of Mobile Technology
- Clinical organizations need to be encouraged to permit nursing student access to their institutional information technology as well
- Develop more specific assignments and/or activities involving the use of Mobile Technology and share with the community of Nurse Educators

DISADVANTAGES TO USING MOBILE TECHNOLOGY

- Lack of available IT support
- Difficulty in learning how to use Mobile Technology
- High price of the devices and the necessary applications
- Faculty resistance to learning and implementing mobile technology
- Lack of role-modeling by faculty
- Some clinical facilities are not permitting nursing students to use their cellphones, personal digital assistants (PDAs), or tablets in their institutions

ADVANTAGES TO USING MOBILE TECHNOLOGY

- Permit quick and easy access to large amounts of up-to-date information
- Increase nursing students’ self-efficacy in information technology
- Enhance learning while in nursing programs (in classroom, clinical, and laboratory settings)
- Improve interactions between nursing students and nurse educators to enhance learning
- Facilitate preparation for evidence-based practice in the current practice environment.

FUTURE RESEARCH

The question then is posed – How do we make Information Technology and Mobile Devices in Nursing Education work? Some of the possible solutions have been presented herein but nurse educators need to continue to advance towards the goals of the original ICN Position Statement (International Council of Nurses, 1997) by meeting these challenges and sharing the discovered solutions.

REFERENCES