

Introducing Nursing Students to Handoff Report: an SBAR Activity

Learner Objectives

1. Relate the importance of introducing handoff report methodology to nursing students early in the nursing curriculum.
2. Describe an innovative teaching strategy for students to learn the basics of handoff report.

Description of Teaching Strategy or Project

Handoff reports impact patient safety. Nursing students must demonstrate competence with “communication practices that minimize risks associated with handoffs among providers and across transitions in care” (qsen.org). A review of nursing literature through CINAHL and ProQuest Health and Medical databases revealed a limited amount of research regarding undergraduate nursing student exposure to handoff reports.

A teaching plan was developed to introduce beginning nursing students to handoff reports. The plan included a brief PowerPoint presentation of concepts as well as a handout with SBAR prompts and the SHARE and ANTICIPATE acronyms to assist students in formatting report. An innovative interactive activity involving role play was planned to allow translation of the concepts and usages of the tools to actual nursing practice. The Assimilation Theory was used as a supporting framework to promote meaningful learning. A pre-test survey indicated that 60% of students identified deficient knowledge of what patient data to include in report and 90% of students declared deficient knowledge regarding prioritization of the data.

Implementation of Strategy or Project

The teaching plan was implemented in a post-conference for ten baccalaureate nursing students. Following the PowerPoint presentation and overview of the handout, students practiced giving a handoff report on their assigned clinical patient to their peers. Next, the peer provided feedback on information that was omitted from report.

Outcomes of Teaching Strategy or Project

A post-test evaluation revealed that every student indicated that they gained sufficient knowledge of what patient data to include in handoff and how to prioritize information. Nursing faculty plan to adopt the SBAR learning activity for all students in their first clinical rotation.

Implications for Education/Educators

Introducing handoff report early in the nursing curriculum prepares student nurses for their clinical rotation and promotes safe, efficient patient care. This project augments nursing knowledge by providing an innovative, active- learning strategy to facilitate student competency with handoff reports.