Title:
Clinical Experience for Senior Level Nursing Students: Impact of a Designated Education Unit

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Session Title:
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Keywords:
Dedicated Education Unit (DEU), clinical education and nursing education

References:

Abstract Summary:
Description of the development of an academic-practice partnership to enhance nursing students clinical experiences, increase students learning and competency of hands on patient care, and at the same time provide the practice partner with practice ready nursing graduates to fill their open positions.

Learning Activity:

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<th>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE</th>
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<td>1) Understand leadership skills necessary to develop an academic-practice partnership.</td>
<td>Information on poster and presenter presence to answer questions.</td>
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<td>2) Identify positive impact of alternative student clinical experiences on nursing practice and nursing students.</td>
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Abstract Text:
Healthcare organizations that depend greatly on an adequately prepared nursing workforce, have voiced concerns about the new nurse candidates not being “practice ready” to fill the increasing number of registered nurse vacancies in their organizations. In light of these concerns, nurse educators throughout the country have explored ways to transform nursing education in order to produce the type of skilled and knowledgeable nurse that is practice ready for the future healthcare environment. After conducting a thorough review of the evidence which included searching data bases, professional organizations websites, attending conferences, and interviewing other nurse educators around the country, the evidence strongly supported development and implementation of a Designated Educational Unit (DEU). In order to implement a project of this magnitude, a great deal of investment in time and personnel are needed to develop the academic-practice partnership and the infrastructure to ensure success. In collaboration with the academic and practice leaders, the author set out on the journey of building a strong partnership between a large health care system and a private religious liberal arts university offering several health profession programs in the Midwest. A taskforce, led by the author, was formed that included members from both the practice and academic organizations. After 18 months of strategic planning, an academic-practice partnership between the SON and the health care system has been achieved. The process and framework for the DEU was established and began January 26, 2015.
The DEU is located on a 24 bed inpatient unit. The small unit size has placed a limitation on the number of students that can be placed on the unit each semester. To date eight senior level students have completed a one semester Medical/Surgical clinical experience on the DEU. Due to the small \( n \) data collection is ongoing. Outcomes measures for this project evaluate students’ readiness to practice, self-efficacy, critical thinking, knowledge of readiness to practice, and student perception of readiness to practice. Tools utilized for measurement of outcomes are student surveys and focus group questioning. Currently positive outcomes have been noted as a result of the development of the practice partnership formed between the Regional Medical Center and the University as well as positive clinical experiences for the nursing students.