Title: Creating a Healthy Work Environment through Mentoring for Novice Nurse Educators

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Keywords: academic environment, mentoring and novice clinical nurse educators

References:


Abstract Summary:
This presentation will address mentoring strategies that assist novice educators in gaining new skills and self-confidence in their ability to teach. Through discussion of research findings, both novice and experienced educators will be stimulated to explore ways to help experienced clinicians move successfully to their new role as nurse educators.

Learning Activity:

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<th>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</th>
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<td>The learner will be able to identify challenges that experienced clinicians encounter while transitioning to the new role of clinical nurse educator.</td>
<td>In their new roles, novice clinical nurse educators have expressed frustration and a sense of being overwhelmed. This presentation is from a study framed within a Clinical Nurse Educator Academy, which was designed to prepare experienced clinicians for new roles as part-time or full-time clinical nurse educators. The Academy explored the process of nurses moving from “expert to novice.” The research question for the study was, “How can narratives of clinicians participating in a Clinical Nurse Educator Academy enhance understanding of the unique perspectives of these individuals as they prepare for roles as clinical nurse educators?” Participants wrote narratives that identified important challenges in transitioning to their new role and ideas for helpful mentoring strategies.</td>
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<td>The learner will be able to identify characteristics of a healthy academic environment that fosters effective mentoring and support for novice educators.</td>
<td>Analysis of the research data suggested many novel strategies to assist experienced clinicians in transitioning to their new role as clinical nurse educators. Mentoring within a supportive environment was identified by all of the participants as a vital element in their transition. Effective approaches or strategies to assist in building a healthy academic work environment that evolved from the research will be presented. Suggestions for further research will be explored.</td>
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<td>The learner will be able to discuss specific mentoring strategies that provide a supportive environment for expert clinicians to gain self-confidence and learn new skills for their new role as clinical nurse educators.</td>
<td>Research findings from novice nurse educators in a Clinical Nurse Educator Academy will be discussed. These findings suggest strategies that will help novice nurse educators transition to their new role.</td>
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Healthy work environments are essential for the recruitment and retention of nursing faculty internationally. Research has demonstrated that mentoring can help to create an academic environment that fosters healthy inquiry and self-confidence for nurse clinicians transitioning to a nurse educator role (Sorrell & Cangelosi, 2016). A nurse participant in our research study stated, “Please mentor me! Don’t just orient me.” The mentoring process is much more than orientation; it is a critical element in the establishment of a healthy academic environment (Clark, 2015; Eller, Lev, & Feurer, 2014) and a specific catalyst in the global development of novice nurse educators (Morton, 2016). A critical shortage of nursing faculty in the United States and internationally has resulted in denied admission to nursing programs for many qualified nursing student applicants in Canada, China, Australia, and Malaysia (AACN, 2014; Reid, Hinderer, Jarosinski, Mister, & Seldomridge, 2013). Without sufficient clinical nurse educators, the ability to prepare nursing students is jeopardized. To meet this need, many nursing programs are looking to experienced clinicians to assume new roles as educators. These nurses often assume this new role with little formal preparation and find that many of the usual guidelines for clinical practice do not appear relevant to their new role as clinical educators (Gardner, 2014; Sorrell & Cangelosi, 2016). Uncertainty and a lack of self-confidence can lead to disappointment, discontent, and even departure from the academic environment (Cangelosi, 2014). Not only does this create dissatisfaction for nurses themselves, but it increases costs for the institution. This presentation is based on our collaborative research that explored the phenomenon of learning to teach. Themes of “buckle your seatbelt”, “embracing the novice”, and “mentoring in the dark” shed light on the importance of careful mentoring of clinicians who are learning new roles as clinical nurse educators. Through the presentation and discussion of our qualitative research findings, our aim is to discuss characteristics of academic work environments that foster mentoring. Our presentation will address strategies that help to create a healthy academic work environment to assist experienced clinicians in gaining new skills and self-confidence in their ability to teach. By giving voice to the challenges and opportunities embedded in the role of the novice clinical nurse educator, findings and recommendations from this research can assist both new and experienced nurse educators to work collaboratively to implement mentoring programs that help to create a healthy academic work environment.