Title:
Using Evidenced-Based Educational Practices to Improve Graduation Rates for RN-BSN Students From Disadvantaged Backgrounds

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Session Title:
Innovative Evidence-Based Strategies for BSN Education
Slot:
F 01: Friday, 28 July 2017: 2:30 PM-3:45 PM
Scheduled Time:
3:50 PM

Keywords:
Evidence-based Nursing Education Practices, Nursing Education Model and Nursing Workforce Diversity

References:
Altmann, T. K. (2011). Registered nurses returning to school for a bachelors degree in nursing: Issues emerging from a meta-analysis of the research. *Contemporary Nurse: A Journal For The Australian Nursing Profession,*39(2), 256-272.

Aponte J., Figueroa, B. N., Madera, M., Campos-Dominguez, G., Panora, E., & Jaramillo, D. J. (2015). Mentoring Hispanic undergraduate and graduate research assistants: building research capacity in nursing. *The Journal of Nursing Education*, *54*(6), 328-34. doi: 10.3928/01484834-20150515-03.

Davidson, S. C, Metzger R, & Lindgren, K. (2011). A hybrid classroom-online curriculum format for RN-BSN students: Cohort support and curriculum structure improve graduation rates. *Journal of Continuing Education in Nursing, 42*(5): 223-32.

Jeffreys, M. (2007). Nontraditional students' perceptions of variables influencing retention: A multisite study. *Nurse Educator*, *32*(4), 161-167.

Kern, B. (2014). Factors that restrict or support retention among RN-to-BSN nursing students: A replication study. *Open Journal of Nursing*, *4*(4), 296-302. doi:10.4236/ojn.2014.44034

Megginson, L. A. (2008). RN-BSN education: 21st century barriers and incentives. *Journal of Nursing Management, 16* (1), 47-55.

Millett, C. M., Stickler, L. M., & Wang, H. (2015). *Accelerated nursing degree programs: Insights into teaching and learning experiences* (Research Report No. RR-15-29). Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service. http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/ets2.12078

Murray, T. (2015). Factors that promote and impede the academic success of African American students in prelicensure nursing education: An integrative review. *Journal of Nursing Education*, *54*(9), S74-81.

Abstract Summary:

A presentation describing an educational model that uses evidence-based educational practices to improve graduation rates for RN-BSN students from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds may equip nurse educators with strategies to develop their own programs at other institutions.

Comments to Organizers:
Unwithdrawn with session
Learning Activity:

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE
Describe barriers to BSN degree completion for nurses from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds.	Introduction and Background a. Overview of current nursing workforce and projected demands for BSN prepared nurses b. Link between nursing workforce diversity and improved patient outcomes c. Barriers to BSN degree completion for nurses from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. d. Description of HRSA NWD grant project
Identify evidence-based educational strategies to improve student success for nurses from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds	Overview of educational model. Description of evidence-based educational strategies to improve student success for nurses from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds
Describe the components of an evidence-based educational model designed to promote nursing workforce diversity	Components of evidence-based educational model designed to promote nursing workforce diversity a. Structural Support 1. Planned progression as a single cohort format 2. Individualized advising assistance for enrollment and degree planning 3. Financial Support/tuition assistance 4. Online, flexible scheduling 5. Academic services such as tutoring and online access to writing center b. Environmental Support 1. Faculty office on-site in hospital system 2. Study room and textbook library on-site in hospital system 3. Computer library with connectivity on-site in hospital system 4. Meeting space for faculty and peer mentor meetings c. Social Support 1. On-site faculty member with release time for dedicated mentoring of cohort 2. Selected peer mentors provided with formal training and financial incentive 3. Planned social engagements Evaluation 1. Early evaluation:

	Increased enrollment and retention 2. Planned future program evaluation (Jeffrey's Nursing Student Retention Toolkit) 3. Ongoing sustainability Summary and Conclusion 1. Relevance to conference themes and objectives 2. Implications to Nursing Profession 3. Contributions of evidence-based educational practices to advancing healthcare needs of the global community

Abstract Text:

A diverse and highly educated nursing workforce is essential to improve access to quality healthcare across the globe. The purpose of this presentation is to describe an educational model employing evidence-based educational practices to improve graduation rates of nursing students from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. This model was developed with funding from the United States (U.S.) federal government via a nursing workforce diversity grant. The purpose of the grant project is to increase the number and diversity of baccalaureate-educated nurses from a resource limited community in the rural southern U.S. Structural, environmental and social supports are incorporated to facilitate student academic success.

Structural support is provided through several mechanisms. The students are admitted to the program as a single cohort. The single cohort format is a proven method to reduce attrition of RN-BSN nursing students (Davidson, Metzger, & Lindgren, 2011). Individualized advising, tuition assistance, and flexible scheduling provide further structural support. Because registered nurses report a lack of assistance with advising and enrollment procedures as barriers to returning to school for a baccalaureate degree (Altmann, 2011), one evidence-based strategy employed is individualized advising to assist students with degree planning and course enrollment navigation. Further evidence suggests that structural support such as tuition assistance, flexible scheduling and academic coaching are vital to the successful academic progression of registered nurses returning to school (Altmann, 2011; Davidson, Metzger, & Lindgren, 2011; Kern, 2014; Megginson, 2008). In our model, financial support is provided in the form of grant funded scholarships and tuition assistance from the hospital partner. Courses are delivered via an online distance-learning format that allows for course scheduling that does not conflict with work schedules and does not require travel to attend class. Additionally, access to tutors and online writing support provides students with academic support to help them succeed.

Environmental support is provided through office space for the faculty mentor and a dedicated study space for students, both of which are maintained within the hospital system. The study space contains a complete set of printed course textbooks and computers with a reliable Internet connection to ensure that students have access to the online university library and other online resources. Computer labs and library resources have been identified as factors that positively impact retention of RN-BSN students (Jeffreys, 2007; Kern, 2014). The study space also provides a convenient location for students to engage with each other as well as with faculty and peer mentors.

Social support is another factor identified by Jeffreys (2007) and Kern (2014) to reduce attrition in RN-BSN students. Formal social support includes a dedicated on-site faculty mentor as well as assigned peer mentors. The literature is replete with evidence of the impact of mentorship on positive academic progression and student achievement (Aponte, 2015; Millett, Stickler, & Wang, 2015; Murray, 2015; Tabloski, 2016).

Providing structural, environmental and social support for nurses continuing their education contributes to their success and ultimately results in advancing the nursing profession. The early evaluation of this

educational model is positive. Enrollments and diversity of students from the targeted community have increased with current retention rates that are promising. Highly educated nurses from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds contribute to a more culturally aligned nursing workforce and better patient outcomes. Therefore, developing an evidence-based educational model to increase the number and diversity of baccalaureate-educated nurses in the workforce helps to advance the nursing profession and the healthcare needs of the global community.