Enhancing academic writing atmosphere among nurses in the emergency department

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Purpose

Academic writing is regarded as an important professional skill in the clinical ladder. Despite rich nursing experiences most nursing staff possess, their unskilled written expression often results in difficulty in writing relevant reports. The underlying reasons for their unwillingness to participate in academic writing were difficulty in passing, inability to comprehend the literature, lack of motivation, the state of being unable to search for related data, and lack of professional guidance. Since academic writing combines higher-level abilities (such as synthesis, analysis, and evaluation), logical thinking, and organizational skills, such capacity helps learners to enhance professional abilities and nursing quality involved in the caring process. Therefore, it is hoped that a good learning environment could be created via improvement projects drafted by a special committee, with the aim to increasing motivation of academic writing among nursing staff and further enhancing nursing quality.

Method

A special committee workshop was formed to locate the nursing staff that needed to hand in academic reports. The following procedures included making plans for handing in reports, holding writing workshops (case study workshop: twice a year; special committee workshop: once a year), using teaching resources for guidance (with clinical instructors helping nursing staff find cases and topics appropriate for academic writing), and forming a LINE group. Workshop instructors provided timely solutions based on the learners’ questions and monitored their writing progress, to increase the motivation of academic writing and the completion rate of report submission among nursing staff in the emergency department.

Results

With special committee workshops used to increase the motivation of academic writing among nursing staff in the emergency department, the results revealed that during January 2015 and June 2016, 13 out of 15 case report submissions passed, yielding a high passing rate of 87%. Significant enhancement in writing academic reports and searching for literature was also found among those nursing staff.

Conclusion

A serious lack of nursing workforce in recent years and the unique need for taking shifts have affected nursing staff’s motivation to participate in academic writing. However, the clinical ladder program requires nursing staff to move upward based on their completion of academic case reports. The intervention from a special committee to enhance the writing ability among colleagues in the emergency department enabled nursing staff to utilize their professional knowledge for discussion over the caring issues related to patients, thus enhancing nursing quality and job satisfaction as they built professional confidence.