Title:
Improving Transition-to-Practice by Strengthening Community Partnerships: A Delphi Approach

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References:


Abstract Summary:
Improving transition to practice for nursing students can be a challenging process. A Delphi method was used to identify competency gaps among new nurses in order to align nursing education curricula and healthcare practice.

Learning Activity:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE</th>
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<tr>
<td>The learner will be able to describe methods for improving nursing education and clinical practice partnerships.</td>
<td>The use of the Delphi method for identification of competency gaps among new nurses</td>
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<tr>
<td>The learner will be able to identify and describe barriers to improving nursing education and clinical partnerships</td>
<td>Key barriers related to improving nursing education and clinical practice partnerships</td>
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Abstract Text:
Improving transition to practice among nursing students is a challenging endeavor. While most nursing faculty believe that students are ready for practice, only a small percentage of nurse leaders in healthcare agree. As healthcare facilities struggle with the increased cost of training new nurses, academic units continue to educate nursing students based on traditional methods. This creates a significant gap in competencies among new nurses that can ultimately fall on the healthcare facility to address. Increases in competency gaps can extend orientation time as new nurse’s transition into practice and create a significant financial burden on the healthcare facility. The strengthening of community partnerships among healthcare facilities and academia may improve transition to practice, and ultimately shorten orientation time for new nurses.
Texas A&M College of Nursing has embarked on efforts to improve its relationships with its community partners. As the facilitator of this project, I incorporated many concepts learned in the Sigma Theta Tau Emerging Educational Administrator Institute (EEAI).

The goal for this project was to create a community partnership program to facilitate the transition to practice of nursing students. Three phases were established. Phase 1 included assembling an advisory board of nurse leaders to represent the major healthcare facilities in the region. Phase 2 included the initiation of a two-round Delphi study in conjunction with community partners to identify key competency gaps among new nurses. Phase 3 will include using the information from the Delphi study to inform nursing education curriculum to better prepare nursing students for practice. This project is currently in phase two of data collection.

The EEAI served as a catalyst for this project by helping me to understand how to function as an administrative liaison between the College of Nursing and its community partners. Nursing education and practice both function within a dynamic healthcare system that requires the identification of important issues within both disciplines. To facilitate this type of project requires knowledge of effective communication, identification of key stakeholders, interprofessional collaboration, and efficient use of resources. These are all concepts that I brought forward from EEAI to facilitate this project. Overall, this project will facilitate an enhanced community partnership between Texas A&M College of Nursing and its clinical partners. Once fully implemented, students could experience an improved transition to nursing practice.