Title:
Transition to a Student-Driven, Competency-Based Clinical Placement Model for Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Education

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Abstract Summary:
Advanced practice registered nursing programs must ensure clinical placements meet regulatory requirements, thus minimizing student, clinical site, and institutional risk by stipulating responsibilities and liabilities of each party. This project outlines development of a clinical placement model designed to address challenges associated with national expansion, regulatory requirements, and educational standards.
Learning Activity:

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<th>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE</th>
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<td>1. Identify internal and external challenges to securing clinical placements for APRN students.</td>
<td>Internal Challenges: High enrollments Rapid growth National expansion Increasing demand for nurse educators Noncompetitive educational salaries Proliferation of DNP programs Increasing faculty/staff workloads Lack of APRN workforce diversity External Challenges: Limited number of clinical sites and preceptors Regulatory agency and specialty certification requirements Lack of a central database of state regulatory requirements Limited national funding for clinical education research and preceptor compensation Lack of preceptor development Saturation of clinical sites Limited preceptor incentives</td>
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<td>2. Describe relationship between APRN curriculum and the clinical placement model.</td>
<td>Integrated APRN curriculum Ideal curricular alignment between didactic content and clinical experiences Clinical placement timeline</td>
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<td>3. Describe a new model for efficient clinical placement that allows for optimal clinical learning while minimizing risk to the student, clinical site, and institution.</td>
<td>Managing student and faculty expectations Student selection of sites Competency-based site selection Faculty vetting of clinical sites Role of clinical advisor Role of the clinical placement team Central messaging Data management Risk management Essential policies and procedures</td>
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Abstract Text:

In 2011, the Institute of Medicine’s Future of Nursing report described the potential for advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) to contribute to the provision of high-quality healthcare as part of comprehensive healthcare reform. Schools of nursing have responded with the expansion of APRN programs. However, challenges exist with providing high quality APRN clinical education that meets all state, agency, and specialty certification requirements.

Securing sufficient clinical placements for APRN students is a significant challenge that limits the capacity of educational programs to meet current and projected workforce demands. These challenges mandate exploration of innovative and efficient ways to ensure clinical placements that offer opportunities for students to meet clinical objectives and develop APRN competencies. It is imperative that programs establish processes that ensure verification that all clinical placements meet regulatory and contractual requirements, thus minimizing risk to the student, clinical site, and institution by clearly stipulating the responsibilities and liabilities of each party.

Licensure to practice in the United States requires successful program completion demonstrating clinical competency and preparedness for safe entry into practice. Those eligible for licensure have completed a minimum of 500 supervised direct care clinical practice hours during their program of study. A rapidly
growing number of institutions now offer distance education APRN programs, with a subsequent demand for nationwide clinical placements. The Alliance for Nursing Accreditation Statement on Distance Education Policies recognizes this proliferation and calls for maintaining high standards of quality assurance with the provision of resources for successfully attaining all program objectives.

This project outlines the evolution of a student-driven distance education APRN clinical placement model designed to address the challenges associated with rapid national expansion, regulatory requirements, and maintenance of high quality educational standards. Three phases of the project evolution are presented in the context of a Faculty Leadership Progression Plan with emphasis in each phase on 1) short and long-term goals, 2) barriers and strategies to overcome them, and 3) lessons learned. Project feasibility, value, impact, and sustainability are also explored.