Integration and Leveling of Nutritional Principles in a Traditional ASN Nursing Curriculum

Candace Pierce, MSN, RN, CNE; Troy University
Robyn Caldwell, DNP, RN, CNE; Auburn University at Montgomery

### Background Information

- Nutrition is an integral part of health promotion, disease prevention and treatment across the lifespan.
- Students limited by concrete thinking hinders their development of clinical reasoning.
- This problem persists in clinical practice.

### Benefits of Leveling Nutritional Principles

**Faculty**
- Integration of nutritional principles facilitates critical thinking by linking theory and practice.
- Leveling promotes deeper learning by building on previous knowledge.
- Fragmentation occurs in traditional nursing curricula where content overlaps but fails to demonstrate appropriate leveling.

**Students**
- Knowledge retention facilitates critical appraisal of patient needs in the clinical setting.
- Nutritional principles are identified in both Health promotion and Maintenance and Basic Care and Comfort (6-12%).
- Leveling nutritional concepts throughout could increase ability to formulate linkages between theory and practice.

### Objectives

- Discuss integrating nutritional principles throughout an ASN curricula.
- Discuss the influence of fragmentation of nutritional concepts in ASN curricula.
- Discuss how nutritional concepts enhance clinical reasoning in ASN curricula.

### Student Learning Outcomes

**Fundamentals:**
- Remember & Comprehend
  - Examine personal dietary intake and nutrient content.
  - Identify components required to meet optimal nutritional standards.
  - Identify appropriate nutritional support for optimal patient outcomes.

**Adult Health I:**
- Application
  - Assesses influences of disease on nutrient absorption.
  - Identifies diagnostic tests which identify nutrient deficiencies.

**Adult Heath II:**
- Analysis
  - Analyze patient data and develop nutritional plan based on disease processes.
  - Interdisciplinary collaboration to ensure optimal patient outcomes.
  - Demonstrates EBP in nutritional education.

### Implementation Strategies

**Fundamentals:**
- Remember & Comprehend
  - Dietary recall and self reflection.
  - Develops appropriate meal plan based on dietary recall and self evaluation.
  - Skills demonstration of nutritional support modalities.

**Adult Health I:**
- Application
  - Disease specific concept maps.
  - Examine patient laboratory data for discrepancies.
  - Formulate an appropriate teaching plan.

**Adult Heath II:**
- Analysis
  - Comprehensive nutritional assessment.
  - Ensure appropriate patient consults.
  - Providing patient specific nutritional teaching.