Implementing Clinical Accommodations for Students with Physical Disabilities in Nursing Education

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Introduction

Background
- More students with disabilities seeking degrees
- Most nursing programs lack a developed framework for accommodation
- Most nursing faculty lack knowledge on accommodation
- Clinical accommodations are more often needed and less often provided in nursing education programs

Significance
- Student success dependent on faculty’s effectiveness during accommodation implementation
- Nursing faculty lack resources and guidance on effective accommodation implementation
- Without proper guidance many faculty struggle with effective accommodation implementation

Purpose
- Uncover the process by which faculty make reasonable academic accommodations for nursing students with orthopedic impairments within the clinical setting of a pre-licensure nursing education program

Methods

Research Question
What is the process by which faculty make reasonable academic accommodations for pre-licensure nursing students with physical disabilities, specifically orthopedic impairments, in the clinical setting of a nursing education program?

Research Design
Constructivist Grounded Theory

Recruitment
594 nursing programs across 20 states
29 potential participants identified

Participants
11 Full-time Nurse Educators

Results

Two Processes Emerged from the Data
1. Faculty Perceptions of Their Experience Navigating the Clinical Accommodation Process
2. Reaching the Bottom Line

Faculty Participants defined “The Bottom Line” as the importance of the student meeting the course objectives

Themes

Planning Ahead
- “It’s going to take additional time to figure out how to accomplish the course objectives in a way that you’ve not done before”

Collaborating
- “If you’ve never encountered how am I going to handle that? What am I going to do? I think that has helped a lot, having more than one perspective in the room to talk those things out”

Getting Out of the Box
- “We see, the stethoscope, and giving needles, and doing life saving measures type of role as a nurse when in fact there are so many other roles above and beyond just doing that”

Fostering Equality
- “Are we doing harm to her by not giving her the opportunity to take care of x? Are we and not knowing?”

Using Trial and Error
- “We don’t know. We’re going to be doing this all brand new and together”

Conclusions

1. Key steps in the accommodation implementation process identified
2. Accommodation implementation most effective when steps used in conjunction with each other
3. Accommodation process has numerous barriers, facilitators, and stakeholders
4. Additional research on the accommodation process in nursing education is needed

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References

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