The Transition From Military Nurse to Nurse Faculty

Katie Chargualaf, PhD, RN, CMSRN
Brenda Elliott, PhD, RN, CNE
Barbara Patterson, PhD, RN, ANEF

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**Disclosure**

- **Katie Chargualaf, PhD, RN, CMSRN**  
  University of South Carolina, Aiken, SC, USA

- **Brenda Elliott, PhD, RN, CNE**  
  Wilson College, Chambersburg, PA, USA

- **Barbara Patterson, RN, PhD, ANEF**  
  Widener University, Chester, PA, USA

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Session Objectives

- Discuss the military nurse officer transition from military nursing to nurse faculty
- Discuss significant turning points military nurse officers may experience upon leaving military nursing practice and entering academia
- Identify professional and organizational strategies to assist military nurses in the transition
Acknowledgements

- Active duty military women and men
- Veteran nurses who participated in this study
Growing faculty shortage requiring innovative recruitment & retention strategies

Transition into academia often described as challenging

Military nurses offer a wealth of knowledge & experience deemed valuable to the nurse faculty role and schools of nursing
Military and Veteran Culture

- Mission driven
- Teamwork
- Structure and rules
- Camaraderie
- Distinct hierarchy and rank
- Frequent moves
- New assignments
- Accountability
- Deployments
- Separations from social supports
Purpose

To explore and describe the experience of transition from military nurse to nurse faculty.
Methodology

- Qualitative, descriptive
- Human subjects approval
- Semi-structured interviews
- Content analysis
- Purposeful and snowball sampling
- 13 female nurse Veterans
  - Navy – 5
  - Army – 6
  - Air Force – 2
Themes

- Acknowledging a New Reality
  - Overcoming Perceptions
  - Translating Skills
  - Sensing a Me Versus We
  - Recognizing Patterns of Communication

- Meeting the Challenge
  - The Learning Curve
  - Balancing Act
  - Using my Leadership Toolbox

- Establishing an Academic Identity
  - Evolving as Faculty
  - Seeing the Fruits of my Labor
Theme 1: Acknowledging a New Reality

I guess I thought it would be somewhat similar to teaching what I had taught before, but I really had no idea what I was getting myself into. Even though I’d done those roles, done research, written grants...It was very different.
Theme 2: Meeting the Challenge

Reflects the process of bridging the gap in teaching skills & knowledge:

The participants observed that they were “not back at ground zero” but instead “learning to integrate my skills into the system in which I was working.”
Theme 3: Establishing an Academic Identity

Acknowledgement of significant milestone(s):

1. Fully understood the faculty role
2. Appreciated nuances of the academic culture
3. Saw themselves as nurse faculty
Discussion

- Identity reformation
- Reconciling value incongruences
- The influence of leadership attributes on transition
Implications

- Recognition of military knowledge and skills brought to the faculty role

- Strengthening orientation to include curricular concepts and best practices in teaching

- Schools of nursing should consider intentional recruitment of military nurses

- Academic – military collaborations to improve succession planning
Conclusion

- Transition complicated by conflicts arising from differences in values
- Despite previous experience, participants felt unprepared for the faculty role
- Leadership attributes from military service helped participants overcome challenges
Questions