



School of Nursing

Conducting Robust Clinical Conferences: A Guide for Clinical Faculty

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Background

Clinical conferences are an integral part of the student nurse's academic growth and development in clinical areas. Nurse educators need to conduct effective and consistent clinical conferences to enhance student learning. There is a paucity of literature supporting faculty on conducting quality clinical conferences. The goal of this project was to identify the value of clinical conferencing and present recommendations to guide faculty on implementing best practices to achieve optimal student learning outcomes.

Method

Informal semi-structured interviews were conducted with six faculty members of a single pre-licensure program selected through convenience sampling. Four faculty were full-time faculty, and two were adjunct faculty. The years of experience for faculty members ranged from two to 15 years. In addition, data was also collected through observation of clinical conferences conducted by four of the faculty members. Peer-review journal articles were researched using electronic databases, namely CINAHL, Science Direct, and Ovid, to find supportive literature for recommendations and suggestions to promote best practice.

Results

Pre and post clinical conferences were conducted by all clinical faculty. Inconsistencies were noted among faculty conducting the clinical conferences. Discrepancies included the content and direction of conferences, the purpose of the conferences, and the use of facilitation practices. Some challenges for faculty included a lack of experience in conducting clinical conferences, missed opportunities to facilitate clinical reasoning and critical thinking, and a lack of opportunity for students to integrate theory in the clinical experience.

Conclusion/Discussion

Faculty must be consistent in using the clinical conference as an opportunity to facilitate learning through planned learning exercises or reflection on experience. Inexperience and lack of cohesiveness in conducting clinical conferences should be addressed to ensure consistency in achieving student learning outcomes.

Based on a comprehensive literature search, a guide recommending best practices when conducting clinical conferences was developed for faculty members to facilitate uniformity and foster optimal learning outcomes. Formative feedback from four of the six faculty members who utilized the guide supported its usefulness in providing structure and direction for conducting more purposeful clinical conferences., specifically for new and inexperienced faculty.

Recommendations are for a systematic review of the usefulness of the guide for faculty and its effectiveness in meeting student learning outcomes.

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