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Engaging Students in the Fundamental Skill Lab: Scenario Based Simulations

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A New Approach to Teaching Basic Nursing Skills:

Unfolding case studies teach skills in context:
- Simulated patient stories develop over the semester
- Each patient has a chart complete with H&P, progress notes, nurses notes, orders and test results

Peer-mentored learning provides individual attention and teaches collaboration:
- One student role-plays the “nurse” and one student is the “coach”
- Roles are reversed for the next scenario
- Students follow scripts through two scenarios each lab session; icons prompt students for appropriate role and response

Aims

Students will:
- Be actively engaged in the basic nursing skills lab
- Develop critical nursing behaviors including: Assessment/Intervention/Evaluation, Critical Thinking/Clinical Decision Making, Direct Patient Care, Communication/Collaboration, Professional Behaviors
- Remember more of what they learn through story-telling (patient cases) and role-playing
- Come prepared to perform as a nurse in lab

Background (Previous Approach)

- Lab instructors spent too much time in skills lab teaching content as opposed to hands-on learning by students (75%/25%)
- Students tuned out while the instructor demonstrated skills
- Students learned psycho-motor skills out of context
- Students practiced skills without being mentally engaged in the nursing process

Critical nursing behaviors are applied:

- After very brief demonstrations in lab, students:
  - Discover, assess and determine appropriate interventions for patient problems
  - Utilize SBAR in communication with providers
  - Practice skills in the context of a scenario

Outcomes:

- From the moment lab starts, students are more engaged in lab than previous approach
- Students report feeling more responsibility to come prepared to lab
- Peer mentored learning increased — students more autonomous in open lab practice

Simulated patient stories develop over the semester:
- Peer mentoring: Assessment and evaluation
- Peer mentoring: Direct patient care, incentive spirometer

Conclusions:

After implementation, students:
- Are more aware of nursing behaviors and professional roles
- Prepare more thoroughly for lab
- View labs as a more realistic environment with consequences for actions

Implications:

- Critical nursing behaviors as well as psychomotor skills can be taught in lab
- Unfolding case studies engage nursing students in lab

Students wear isolation gowns as they log roll a peer playing “Chuck” after his ATV accident. Chuck is on contact precautions for c. difficile.

Simulation Evaluation Tool, Seattle University 2008

Brigham Young University Student Rating System