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Using simulation in the large lecture setting to support year 1 nursing students recognises and respond to a deteriorating patient.

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The Nurse Educators role is to provide a rich educational experience so that all students can achieve excellence providing a safe and high standard of care. The challenges which the Educator must consider include the increase in student numbers which has resulted in the increased demand for clinical placements. Students gain varying exposures to practice experiences. Nursing students come from diverse educational backgrounds with varying clinical experience and are studying different Nursing fields. These are some of the factors which the Educator has to consider when delivering a lecture. There is an increased need for innovative teaching strategies to bridge the gap between theory and practice. Simulation can be used to enrich lectures where large groups of students are usually passive recipients. It is a useful adjunct to real life clinical situations allowing for the development of clinical reasoning and deep learning.

Caring for a deteriorating patient can be a very stressful and demanding experience for the novice nursing student. The content for this topic can be difficult to grasp for students with no or limited exposure to patient care. A simulated scenario on this topic can be covered in the lecture setting thus avoiding initial exposure in an actual situation. Nurses have a responsibility to preserve patient safety which requires them to be able to recognise and assess the deteriorating patient in an appropriate and timely manner. Suboptimal care of the deteriorating patient has been linked to failure or delay in the recognition of cues indicating that the patient is deteriorating.

Method: 110 students from a year one cohort (Adult field) participated in the simulated lecture. A high fidelity simulated scenario was constructed aimed at improving nursing students' recognition and response to patient deterioration. This was run in real time with the students able to observe and monitor the patients' vital signs as the patients' condition deteriorated.

A clear structure was followed with lecture material made available in advance. The clinical scenario was appropriate to the course content already covered and the learning objectives for the session. Documentation was available to the students for recording patient information as the scenario evolved.

Technology: Students used a Socrative app on their mobile phones thus accessing carefully constructed multiple choice questions at key points in the scenario. This enabled all students to be participants. The educator had access to the responses allowing for identification of gaps in learning with immediate feedback and guidance available.

Student Evaluations: There was overwhelming positive reports from all students. They considered this a valuable learning strategy aiding their preparation for clinical practice.

Conclusion: Simulation can be incorporated into large lectures at an early stage in the student's journey enabling students to learn in a safe, structured and supportive environment. It allows for application of theory to practice thus improving outcomes for both the student and importantly the recipients of their care.

Biography

Eunice Greene is a Lecturer (Education) Adult Nursing. She has vast experience in Nurse Education and has established close links with clinical practice throughout the province over many years. Eunice's areas of interest are cardiac nursing, medical and surgical nursing. She is involved in nursing and interprofessional simulation with particular interest in skills development and patient safety issues. She teaches on the BSc (Hons) Nursing Undergraduate Programme and is co-ordinator for the Professional Nursing Values Module. She is well placed to understand the need for and develop teaching strategies which will help link theory to practice thus addressing safe, exemplary nursing care.

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