

Project Title:

Preparing Nurse Practitioner Students to Recognize Health Inequities and Global Health Issues

Abstract Summary

This is a quality improvement project to enhance the preparation of advanced practice or master's level nursing students training for workplace readiness to serve ALL patients and advance health equity locally and globally.

Abstract Text

Purpose: The COVID-19 pandemic has led bare the continuing widespread health inequities across diverse groups. The growth in the diverse local and international population locally and globally compounds the complexity and varied cultural needs of patient populations. A critical step to achieving health equity is to prepare a healthcare workforce that is practice-ready to meet the needs of diverse patient populations at the local and national stage (1-5). We conducted a quality improvement project focused on master's level (MSN) students to ensure they are well prepared to contribute to reducing and eliminating health inequities for ALL patient populations locally and globally. Specific aims were to (1) assess MSN students' learning needs and (2) develop and implement strategies to increase MSN students' knowledge and skills for working with all patient populations.

Methods: In phase 1, we surveyed the students (=130) during the new MSN student orientation. A web-based investigator-developed survey questions elicited: (1) students' knowledge and skills' needs for working with patients from diverse backgrounds locally and globally; and their recommendations to facilitate training or educational preparation to work with all patient populations; and (2) faculty (who taught in the MSN programs) recommendations to integrate diversity and global concepts into MSN courses and need for supports. Survey questions were analyzed with descriptive statistics and narrative questions were analyzed using standard content analyses. In phase 2, findings from phase 1 were used to develop and implement signature assignments to enhance the integration of diverse and global concepts (i.e., health equity) contents across the curriculum.

Results: Students wanted to acquire increased knowledge, skills, and dispositions that enable recognition of health inequities and global health issues to work with all patient populations locally and globally. They were also very clear about what they need to be ready to care for all patient populations. They made several clear and actionable recommendations and ways to enact them, highlighting the need for immersion or clinical placements within communities that they will serve, not just inpatient settings; guest lectures by professionals from patient communities, case studies, or clinical simulations, Faculty were largely in agreement with students about the need for training in diverse patients' populations locally and globally. However, they need education and resources – as well as space to accommodate health equity and global health topics into the curriculum. Four signature assignment exemplars aimed to enhance students' preparation to care for all patient populations were developed and implemented. Students found the assignments thought-provoking and gained insight into areas that they had not previously considered during their education. They found diverse and global concepts exciting and insightful. Faculty found the signature assignment examples resourceful.

Conclusion: Students and faculty agreed that students need to be immersed in communities where they learn from patients' populations that they will serve. Schools of nursing and faculty can enhance nurses' preparation to serve all patients by integrating diversity and global content that are aligned with course learning objectives.

References

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