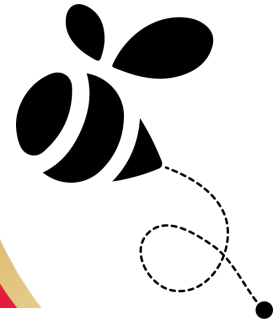


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Scoping Review: Disabled Students and Instructors' Experiences in Nursing Practice

WHAT IS THE RESEARCH ABOUT?

There are limited clinical nursing placements, making it hard for students to find required placements. At the same time, more disabled students are entering nursing degrees. Disabled students may need accommodations during placement. How might the need for accommodations affect a student's nursing placement? To explore this question, the researchers want to find out what is known about accommodations during nursing placements. They wondered what we might learn from the experiences of both disabled students and clinical placement staff.

The research questions for this study were as follows. First, what do we know about the experiences of disabled nursing students during placements? Second, what do we know about instructors' experiences teaching disabled students in nursing placements?

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

More disabled students are entering nursing programs. Thus, clinical nursing placements must offer accommodation more often. However, accessing accommodations during placements can be a complex process. One call for changes in placement site policies is to focus on disabled students' abilities. This call could make disabled students feel less excluded, or like they must hide their disability.

WHAT DID THE RESEARCHERS DO?

The researchers did a scoping review. They choose this type of review because it works well for gaining and combining knowledge. Scoping reviews also allows for including and sharing knowledge through the arts. Through this scoping review, they found 43 papers. With exclusion criteria, the number of papers decreased to 27. The publishing dates of these papers were between 1999 and 2018. Four pieces of photography artwork were created to express some of the findings. You can find the photographs in the original journal or on the AcTinSite York Space.

WHAT DID THE RESEARCHERS FIND?

Based on the papers in the scoping review, the researchers found that clinical instructors spent more time watching disabled students. Some instructors watched to support students when they might have difficulties. Other times watching happened because instructors worried that disabled students might put patient safety at risk. This concern meant disabled students did not have space to learn to deal with complex clinical situations. Disabled students were also closely watched when using assistive technology. Concerns about the use of technology were patient confidentiality and infection control. On occasion, instructors watching disabled students led to instructors advocating on behalf of disabled students.

Researchers also found that disabled students often felt they had to hide their disabilities during nursing placements. The need to hide their disabilities had different causes. For instance, some disabled students did not have time to disclose. Other disabled students thought their disability would not affect their work during placement.

WHAT ARE THE RESEARCHERS PROPOSING?

The scoping review led the researchers to suggest a few possible changes that could positively impact everyone involved in nursing placements. First, they suggest having clear policies for accommodations for student placements. Another helpful change could be to develop and maintain supportive networks for placement instructors. These networks can help instructors apply policy to the unique accommodation needs of each disabled student. The researchers found that when instructors are supported and know the accommodation process, there is an increase in student disclosure of accommodation needs. This shift could lead to more nursing students asking for help, even when they are not disabled. There is also a call to focus on what students can do. This shift in perspective can lead instructors to think creatively about how students can meet skill requirements while providing accommodations. Finally, having policies and training related to technology could help both students and instructors deal with technology concerns during nursing placements.

HOW CAN YOU USE THIS RESEARCH?

Policy Makers can learn about barriers people face when trying to use policies within clinical placements. You may want to consider how disability policies for employees need to adapt for placement students.

Instructors and leaders in education can explore the suggestions and think about how to implement them within their work environments where students' placements occur.

ABOUT THE RESEARCHERS

Dr. Iris Epstein is currently an assistant professor at School of Nursing, a faculty member of Critical Disability Studies program and the co-founder of i.r.i.s lab at York University.

KEYWORDS

Nursing students with disability identity, Nursing clinical placement. Scoping review

CITATION

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