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# Skills Course to Increase Knowledge Retention and Optimize Practice Among Nurses



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(Developmentnews, n.d.)

## Abstract

Continuing professional development is key to education in healthcare for nurses. Healthcare is ever changing and nursing education must reflect this throughout practice and time. Recognition is increasing that many psychomotor skills essential for safe nursing practice are not being retained. New theories and methods are emerging that could influence initial learning and the retention of critical psychomotor skills (Kardong-Edgren et al., 2019). In person skills lessons are implemented to ensure retention of critical skills and to offer an in person learning session for new nurses. Many new nurses come from simulation based only backgrounds. The purpose of the evidence based study is to implement monthly skills sessions to increase knowledge retention. Conclusions synthesized from a review of literature highlight improved skills proficiencies and benefits of additional skills education, emphasizing a need for in person skills sessions.

**Keywords:** Continuing Professional Development, Education, Nurses, Skills

## Introduction

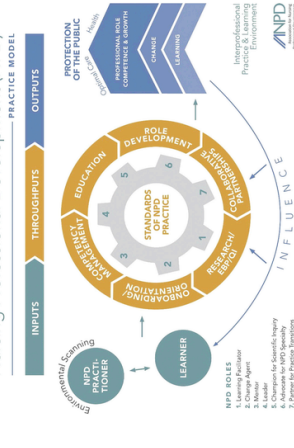
Nurses across clinical settings face the daunting challenge of staying abreast of regulatory mandates, practice changes, equipment updates, and other workplace expectations (Bindon, 2017). In the complex, evolving healthcare setting, professional development is a priority, and the need for ongoing education is critical. Continuing professional development is central to nurses' lifelong learning and constitutes a vital aspect for keeping nurses' knowledge and skills up-to-date (Mlambo et al., 2021). One of the advantages of on-site learning, both formal and informal is that learners can utilize expertise which are already available on the ward. Every state in the United States differs with continuing education laws and certifications, however no law states in person training skills must be completed. An exemption to this is CPR courses or unit based courses that are specific to a specialty.

**Study Purpose:** To educate nurses using in person, monthly, hands on skills courses, and to aid in retention of critical skills to better further nursing practice.

## Review of Literature

- Statistical analysis showed significantly improved skills proficiency for the participating nurses following the educational intervention with hands-on practice of the clinical skills (Robbins, 2020).
- Nurses who received additional skills education (in person and multimedia) had higher evidence based practice skills (Rostamnia et al., 2020).

### Nursing Professional Development (NPD)



- A study conducted by Hockenberry and Colleagues (2009) implemented an "EBP Scholars Program," showing higher confidence level in nurses when looking for the evidence behind practice, when teaching skills, and assuming leadership roles.
- Many nurses prefer informal work-based methods of learning, noting that most meaningful learning occurs through interactions with their colleagues (Mlambo et al., 2021).
- From a study by Clarke (2005), it was noted that nurses found informal learning methods such as supervision, attending team meetings/briefings, mentoring and observations to be important.
- Hands-on skills stations are provided throughout the year during night hours by professional development staff to ensure proper training (Sanchez-Sedeekum & Khairallah, 2020). Job satisfaction and professional development scores improved.

## Methodology

**Research Question:** Does the use of a hands-on monthly skills lessons for staff help to optimize practice and help new-to-practice nurses retain crucial skills?

**Hypothesis:** Monthly skills sessions will help nurses optimize practice and retain information.

**Design:** Experimental study using a pre and post clinical evaluation addressing previous knowledge and new knowledge gained from skills sessions, skills evaluation, and future recommendations.

**Methods:** Qualitative research. Explains and educates staff and applies emerging educational theories and concepts relevant to skills teaching in nursing.

**Materials:** Clinical materials depending on the skill, poster board presentations, and QR codes.

**Ethics:** FHSU IRB approval will be obtained prior to study initiation.

**Strategies:** All new nurses included in education, no assumptions of prior knowledge because a pre quiz is taken to assess this.

### Theoretical Framework:



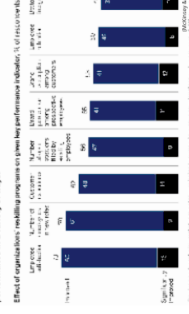
## Implementation

The researcher will implement a monthly skills lesson with new-to-practice nurses on a step down surgical intensive care unit. Monthly skills include, but are not limited to tracheostomy care, arterial line care, and chest tube care. The lesson will include bulletin boards, poster boards, various clinical materials, and QR codes. The QR codes will be used for a pre quiz to evaluate the nurses' previous knowledge and a post quiz to assess for knowledge retention and new knowledge gained.

## Anticipated Findings

**Research Question Results:** Participants will show increase in crucial skill knowledge and retain information. Post QR code quizzes will show an increase in knowledge gained from the skills sessions. This will help optimize practice, increase patient safety, and increase overall evidence based practice skills.

Respondents say their organizations' resiliency efforts have improved performance in a variety of ways.



## Conclusions

Continuous professional development extends the nurses' professional ability beyond pre-registration training, qualification and induction, thereby potentially enhancing the practitioner's practice (Mlambo et al., 2021). Furthermore, such information can be utilized by health care professionals involved in nursing education to inform planning and designing of training and educational programs.

**Future Recommendations:** Using the pre and post QR code quizzes, the researcher can determine what methods and topics need more lessons or assessment and evaluation of skills retention? The study could include all staff and not just new nurses.

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