Utilizing Simulation to Increase Prioritization and Delegation Skills in BSN Students

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Background

Challenges faced by new registered nurses include prioritizing care, developing clinical judgment and delegation of tasks, representing significant areas of concern in nursing education and future practice.

The National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) has identified that prioritization and delegation are key elements in management of care within the safe and effective care environment in the NCLEX Test Plan (NCSBN, 2023). Ross, et al. (2022) found that novice nurses are often overwhelmed and unprepared for professional practice in several areas including communication, prioritization, delegation and care of multiple patients. Multiple patient simulations have shown to increase student confidence in patient safety and prioritization (Ross et.al. 2022).

Introduction

Students have verbalized struggling in the clinical setting and on exams with prioritization and delegation of their patients. They have stated feeling overwhelmed with the prospect of transitioning into the full nursing role and being responsible for more than 1-2 patients following graduation.

To address this gap in professional readiness, a tabletop simulation activity was created. Participation in the activity allowed for students to practice their professional judgement while managing changes in patient conditions and common workload actions. It was presented in a psychologically safe environment and utilized techniques of gamification to enhance student engagement.

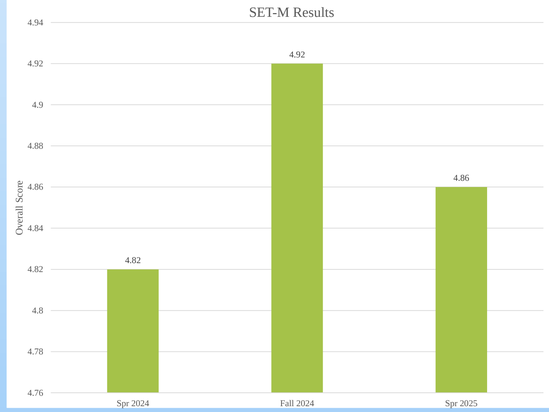
Materials and Method

Development of this tabletop simulation began with creating the case stories for the medical-surgical, postpartum and home health patients. Short case study scenarios including set of vital signs with action and distraction cards were created. Gamification was utilized to encourage student participation throughout this simulated activity.

Students were divided into small working groups of approximately 4 students with a facilitator. Each student group was provided 3 patient assignments to prioritize per round. In each round the students prioritize their patient assignment and discuss their rationale for prioritizing their patient assignment. At scheduled intervales the facilitator would present the group with either an action or distraction card. The cards would require students to alter their plan, ask for assistance or delegate a task. Each group ended each round with a discussion and feedback session before rotating to another group. In total the students participated in 4 patient assignments with a different clinical theme. The final phase of the activity included examining the patients as a entire population on a nursing unit during a morning shift.

Students during 2nd run test of this activity in Fall 2024.

Results



Participants feedback for the tabletop prioritization and delegation simulation was evaluated using an autonomous mixed methods Qualtrics survey accessed by QR code. The 21-question survey consisted of the 19 question Simulation Effective Tool- Modified (SET-M) using a 5-point Likert scale; and two open text questions. Sixty students' responses were collected over three consecutive semesters. The 19 SET-M questions scored between 4.4 (88%) and 5.0 (100%). The overall satisfaction score for Spring 24 was 4.82 (96.4%), Fall 24 was 4.92 (98.31%) and for Spring 25 4.86 (98.2%).

The qualitative results include many similarly themed responses such as "This was very beneficial for prioritization. I would've loved to do this to start preceptorship" and "It prepare us for clinical and for prioritization questions on exams". "We wish we did this more often" was a common statement among the students. The pilot group used an accompanying worksheet that students stated was confusing, and based on feedback modifications were made for the sequential groups.

Future Implementation Plans

Our students enjoyed the gaming style of this simulation activity and gave great feedback; including what distractions could be included in future sessions. In future implementations we will add more patient scenarios with complex presentation including obstetrics and pediatrics to enhance the experience. Continued feedback will be collected so that with each implementation this activity will evolve to stay relevant and useful for the students.

Students during 2nd run test of this activity in Fall 2024.

Contacts and References

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