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Aligning baccalaureate clinical education with the changing character of healthcare

When I began teaching the final semester clinical of an undergraduate baccalaureate nursing program, I felt comfortable with the content and could speak from recent experience. I had worked in, and managed, an emergency department for many years. As this was the students' last semester, I stressed time management, prioritization, delegation, and collaboration. There were case studies and examples to draw from. But the face of nursing today has changed dramatically. There are nursing positions that were non-existent not that long ago. There are nurse navigators, transition nurses, documentation and reimbursement specialists, nurse informaticists, nurse liaisons, patient advocates, and many others. I realized these positions were developed in answer to a need, and I felt a responsibility to understand that need and to convey the information to my students. I was already a member of the Ethics Committee of a local hospital. I became a member of a regional safety coalition, with representatives from all the hospitals in the area. I joined an area care coordination coalition, which focuses on transitions in care and includes representatives from skilled care, rehab, pharmacies, medical supply companies, and numerous community resources. All these people, working together, made it clear that there were issues in health care today that lurked below the surface, that were often hidden from nurses, and, certainly, from nursing students. There is little doubt that information of this sort is pertinent and timely, and it should be incorporated into the curriculum. It is especially appropriate in the final semester of an undergraduate program. And, so, I have worked to accomplish this in a manner that can be adjusted to the times and to on-going changes in the healthcare environment.

Biography

Joan Dorman is working as a Clinical Associate Professor in Purdue University Northwest, USA. She has been professionally affiliated with many organizations like the American Nurses Association, Emergency Nurses Association and National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists. She is the one of the board members at Northwest Indiana Safety Patient Coalition and Ethics Committee St. Catherine Hospital. Her research interest includes Professional Nursing Ethics and Nursing Leadership and Management.

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