

How rural RNs think through clinical problems

Lance Grigg

University of Lethbridge, Canada

Registered nurses who work in rural hospitals not only need critical thinking skills but also need to call on a variety of information at a moment's notice with little medical and ancillary support. Further, the knowledge they need to call on is frequently associated with speciality or critical care practice areas. Indeed, novice rural registered nurses need to acquire a specialized knowledge base, skill set, and relational expertise in order to be successful in rural hospital nursing practice. Unfortunately, novice nurses as well as those who supervise them, suggest that novices feel unprepared for the rigors of rural hospital nursing and so may lack this complex reasoning ability.

Recreating a synthetic natural environment in the simulation lab, unstructured observation and semi-structured qualitative interviews to generate data, 5 novice registered nurses (i.e. less than 5 years post-graduation), 3 registered nurses with 5-10 years of work experience in rural hospitals, and 7 registered nurses with over 10 years of work experience in rural hospitals were invited to participate in this pilot study. The aim of the study was to explore how rural registered nurses think through clinical problems.

This purpose of this presentation is threefold: to present the lessons learned when using a simulated environment for conducting research; to discuss the findings of this study; and last, to provide recommendations to undergraduate nursing programs and employers that support and enhance Registered Nurses clinical reasoning ability.

Biography

Lance Grigg is a Professor at the University of Lethbridge in the Faculty of Education. His focus of research has been on critical thinking in context.