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Preparing students for clinical placements: The student perspective

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Background: Educating undergraduate nurses in the 21st century provides some very realistic challenges. Decreased government health budgets, increased student numbers and higher patient acuities have resulted in a reduction in the availability and quality of clinical placements. Simulated nursing practice is an innovative strategy designed to address these concerns. A simulation program was designed for first year undergraduate nursing students to help prepare them for clinical placement.

Aims: The aim of this research is to assess student perspectives and learning from the newly introduced simulation program.

Methods: This study is a descriptive design with Kolb's experiential theory providing a theoretical framework. 158 first year students taking part in a four day simulation program chose to complete a questionnaire on program completion. Students responded to five statements using a likert scale and for the remaining four questions, responses were categorized and merged to form broader categories for discussion.

Results: Students reported significant learning in the areas of basic clinical skills and clinical documentation and collaborative care. 100% of students recommended the program continue.

Biography

Nancy McNamara is currently pursuing PhD from Central Queensland University in Australia. She is a Senior Nursing Lecturer working in the Postgraduate Nursing Program in the Centre for Health and Social Practice at Wintec in New Zealand. She has an interest in simulation in nursing education and has published several papers in reputed journals.

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