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Collaboration in student's simulated clinical practice

Nancy McNamara

Waikato Institute of Technology, New Zealand

For many undergraduate students in the health industry, limited numbers of quality clinical placements and variable placement experiences limit learning opportunities. In order to introduce students to the collaborative care and develop communication skills, social work, occupational therapy and nursing students in undergraduate health programs at Wintec in New Zealand took part in a simulated Inter-professional meeting which was part of a simulated nursing practice program. Self-selecting participants completed a questionnaire answering five open ended questions and responded to an opportunity to take part in a focus group. Research findings were analyzed through a process of thematic analysis whereby each sentence of data was analyzed in the first instance and categorized. Categories were then analyzed and merged where appropriate to form the overall themes. Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Theory provided a theoretical framework to guide this study. Of the 72 participants, (54 nursing students, 8 occupational therapy students and 10 social work students) (n=48) responded to the questionnaire. Nine of these students also took part in the focus group. Themes identified from overall participant responses were: Professional role clarification and awareness, preparedness, safety and realism. Results in this study suggest that the simulated collaborative meeting overall provided a valuable learning experience for students. The study also highlighted the need to ensure that all students involved, receive the same information and are well prepared for the simulated meeting. Further research is required within the professional group to establish the value of including this type of experiential learning into undergraduate health and social practice programs.

Biography

Nancy McNamara is currently pursuing her 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.

Nancy.McNamara@wintec.ac.nz

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