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Teaching for a “sense of salience” in nursing education regarding diabetes management

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Today's health care system presents an ever increasing complexity that requires nurses to possess multiple skills including interprofessional collaboration skills, cost effectiveness, currency, informatics skills, technical skills, clinical reasoning skills and a need for life-long learning. Both the Institute of Medicine (2011) and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (2010) have called for radical transformation in the way nurses are educated. A particular challenge to nursing education is the need to bridge the gap between theory and clinical. Nursing education often clearly demarcates acquisition of theory knowledge in the classroom and clinical practice and does not effectively assist students with the application of theory knowledge to hands on patient care. This sharp separation of classroom and clinical teaching must be overcome. “Teaching for a sense of salience” dictates that nurse educators better assist students with this translation of theory to practice. This challenge in nursing education includes the need to not only improve the way students acquire theory based knowledge (signs, symptoms, pathophysiology), but to also effectively translate theory knowledge to the clinical area to provide effective hands on patient care in order to improve patient outcomes. Chronic illnesses such as diabetes mellitus are multidimensional and require nurses not only to possess theory knowledge but effective clinical skills as well. Strategies for increasing salience related to diabetes mellitus management in classroom and clinical settings includes evolving case studies, in class active learning strategies, simulation activities and strategies to promote teaching effectiveness of adjunct clinical instructors.

Biography

Lucy Mays is a member of the faculty at Morehead State University. She is the Coordinator of the Associate Degree Nursing Program, Morehead Campus where she enjoys teaching medical surgical related content. She is a family nurse practitioner who works in primary care with general and indigent populations. She is very active in promoting positive health outcomes in the community to help prevent end organ disease and comorbidities related to health behaviors.

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