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Poster · June 2018

DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.2.18554.80320

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RNAO'S BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES IN THE NURSING CURRICULUM – IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE



Autores

Vanessa Antunes¹, Olga S. Valentim¹, Fátima Pereira¹, Fátima Frade¹, Cristiana Firmino¹, Joana Marques¹, Maria José Nogueira¹, Luís Sousa^{1,2}

Afiliação

1. Escola Superior de Saúde Atlântica, Fábrica da Pólvora, 2730-036 Barcarena. 2. Centro Hospitalar Lisboa Central, Hospital Curry Cabral, Rua da Beneficência n.º 8 1069-166 Lisboa.

Background

In the last 30 years Nursing Education in Portugal went through several changes which directly impacted on the professional development model and on the recognition of nurse's scope of practice.

As our professionals' skills become more recognized in the global health market, also our need to improve education and professional development rises. The best way to enhance the quality of practice education provided to undergraduate nursing students and improve clinical outcomes, is by enriching the academic curriculum with evidence-based nursing practices (EBNP).¹

The Best Practice Guidelines Program (BPGP) was developed by the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario (RNAO) to support EBNP.²

Objective

To provide an update on the process of implementation of RNAO's Best Practice Guidelines (BPGs) in the nursing curriculum.



Methods

The implementation process was supported by the RNAO's Toolkit for Implementing Best Practice Guidelines (BPGs).³ It is a comprehensive resource manual, grounded in theory, research and experience that provides the practical processes, strategies and tools to both Providers, Educational Institutions, Governments, and others committed to implement and evaluate BPGs.

Results

As we planned the BPGs selection and implementation, we brought together some of the suggested activities from the six steps of the manual. It resulted in the selection of three clinical guidelines^{4,5,6} and a system and healthy work environment, as following⁷:



We considered two main areas to intervene in order to address the challenge of generating scientific evidence for nursing practice: the academic and the clinical setting (partner institutions where students undertake their clinical practice). The implementation process included three fundamental players from both settings: professors, nursing students and clinical nursing instructors. To evaluate our performance and measure the improvements, we created structure, process and outcomes indicators for each guideline.

| SYSTEM/ ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE | PROCESS | OUTCOME |
|---|--|--|
| Availability of <u>structured preceptor education programs</u> within practice and academic settings | Percentage of nursing students who <u>participate in clinical practice reflection activities</u> | Nursing students satisfaction with practice education and training received |
| <u>Variety</u> of clinical practice choices | Percentage of clinical preceptors who attend a <u>structured preceptor education program</u> | Nursing students satisfaction with the range of options for clinical practice placements |
| Opportunities for the <u>professional development of faculty members</u> related to practice education in nursing | Percentage of <u>simulation practice opportunities</u> offered for nursing students | Preceptors satisfaction with their role and support from educational institutions |
| <u>Funding</u> processes in place to support and implement <u>preceptor programs</u> and <u>simulation labs</u> | Percentage of <u>practice education settings outside of hospital settings</u> | Retention of expert nurse practitioners who have acted as preceptors to students |
| <u>Funding</u> processes in place to support <u>research</u> in the science of nursing education | Percentage of <u>students involved in research processes</u> | Retention of new graduate nursing students within partners organizations |
| | | Percentage of papers published with students participation |

Data collection tools were first used in the curricular units that precede clinical teaching, and results will be processed and analyses by the end of the semester.

Conclusions

Professors, students and partners institutions successfully engaged in the initiative. We are investing in an action plan to embed the evidence-based practice culture, through an orientation program for the clinical nursing instructors. The strategy is to strengthen the relationship with providers in order to standardize evidence-based procedures and improve both nurses' education and quality of care.

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