

Teams Model of Clinical Education: Rethinking the Approach

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Abstract

Through a curriculum centered upon EBP, clinical reasoning, & innovation, a university shifted the model of clinical education. They transitioned away from rotating students through facilities, cycling in and out each semester, where they do not spend any significant time. In contrast, they moved toward a cohort based model where students are assigned to a clinical facility for their program; the location of actual experiences are driven by the agency needs and future workforce expectations.

Introduction

Preparing the future workforce to navigate a highly complex, diverse, and growing health systems has never been more important. RNs have been the focus of public eye since the start of the pandemic in 2020. Developing quality and safe professionals has always been the focus of nursing programs and practice partners, but this has been brought into clearer focus as both navigate the impacts of a nursing shortage and a critical need for specialized RNs.



Team Logos for Summer 2022 Teams; Logos used for documents and swag

Methods

The Teams Model includes diverse clinical placement within a clinical agency for the duration of their clinical program experience. Students attend a majority of their clinical placement on a specific unit, stepping out to specialty experiences throughout the program. Students remain with the same group of students, at the same facility meeting all program requirements and course outcomes. A critical component of this innovation was support for practice partners to navigate the new clinical model. The university provided a faculty member who was assigned as a Team Ambassador. This role was designed to be an extension of the nursing program in a supporting role for the agency and the clinical Team. Training materials were developed for bedside staff. Students were asked to complete a survey selecting a pathway of learning centered on their interest and understanding of specialty nursing pathways.

Teams Approach to Clinical Nursing Experience

Edson College is launching a new model of nursing education for Fall 2021. The Teams Model involves placing students in a clinical agency for the majority of their clinical hours. This model has worked effectively with our partners in the past. The goals include:

- Goals**
 - Developing a collaborative pipeline that matches nursing students with a stable clinical partner at the start of their professional nursing program.
 - Sustaining the relationship between students and their practice partners
 - Assisting students in learning to act like a nurse beyond the acute care clinical nursing model.
 - Meeting the Institute of Medicine Quality Chasm reports and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Future of Nursing report outcomes.
- Focus**
 - Ambulatory Care
 - Acute Care
 - Pediatric Care
 - Perioperative Care
 - Behavioral Health
 - Hospice/Palliative Care
 - Long Term Care
 - Rehabilitation Care
 - Home Health
- Support for clinical partners**
 - Edson College will provide ongoing development, as needed, via in-person seminars, webinars and asynchronous learning modules.
 - Faculty will provide preceptor education to designated nurses from each partner facility, tailoring the materials to the facility and using varying teaching modalities. A preceptor program completion certificate will be awarded to each nurse completing the program.
 - Explore how student background, interests, and expectations as a clinician relate to placements across an array of a partnership practice settings.

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What is your current perspective of the new Teams Model as you have experienced this fall 2021 term?

- The concept is fantastic and like anything new there is opportunity for improvement in how the model is operationalized.
- The idea of the new Teams Model is great! Super innovative approach to traditional nursing school
- So far, great. I love the idea of having them for all of their rotations.
- The teams model as it has been laid out this fall seems to foster the clinical professional development of the nurse of the future in the culture of nursing as experienced in the clinical agency.

What do you see as a benefit to this new model of clinical education?

- Consistency in student groups to the organization which assists in recruitment into nurse extern and residency programs. Provides nurse leaders an opportunity to identify individual students that may be a good fit to the unit/organization.
- Consistency in clinical site for the students and faculty provides opportunities for deeper enculturation into the organization (policies, procedures, values) and professional socialization.
- A huge benefit of this new model is that it gives the students a better, more insightful and accurate picture of the different types of nursing paths they can take.
- For the students, a constant environment to better understand the inner workings of acute care. From the hospital standpoint, possible transition into floor nursing after graduation allows another stream building a workforce.
- seeing growth and development over a period of time

What do you see as an opportunity for Teams Model?

- skills practice
- meaningful learning experiences
- limited facility/unit exposure
- future employment
- personal growth

What are you concerned about with the Teams Model?

- minimal exposure to diverse units
- under preparedness for the profession
- minimal exposure to diverse patient population
- night shift
- no concerns
- school-life balance

Results

Program students were surveyed at week 4 and week 10 of the term. At week 4, students reported uneasiness about clinical experiences surrounding being new at something, being fearful of making a mistake, and not knowing what to expect in the clinical environment. Student concerns related to the Teams Model were minimal and remained positive about the model and expectations.. At week 10, students reported positive feelings of their Team, their clinical faculty, and comradery. A survey was sent to practice partners.



Results

Practice partners reported positive feelings of the model. Partners described the model as fostering the clinical professional development of the nurse of the future. Partners described the model as giving students a better, more insightful, and accurate picture of the different types of nursing as well as leading to increased comfort and confidence in the clinical area. Partners also mentioned a steady increase in workforce preparedness with the model.

Conclusion

The constant cycling of nursing students leaves little opportunity for student nurse preceptors to see students' progress and celebrate student learning successes. Building reciprocal relationships between clinical agencies and the nursing academic unit propelled the creation of an intentional clinical model that is mutually beneficial. When a thoughtful program is created to build confidence in new graduate nurses through immersion experiences in a consistent, welcoming, and prepared clinical environment, opportunities for learning grow.

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