

Improving Effectiveness of Students' Learning during Clinical Rotations at a Teaching Hospital in Rwanda

Authors : Nanyombi Lubimbi, Josette Niyokindi

Abstract : Background: As in many other developing countries in Africa, Rwanda suffers from a chronic shortage of skilled Health Care professionals including Clinical Instructors. This shortage negatively affects the clinical instruction quality therefore impacting student-learning outcomes. Due to poor clinical supervision, it is often noted that students have no structure or consistent guidance in their learning process. The Clinical Educators and the Rwandan counterparts identified the need to create a favorable environment for learning. Description: During orientation the expectations of the student learning process, collaboration of the clinical instructors with the nurses and Clinical Educators is outlined. The ward managers facilitate structured learning by helping the students identify a maximum of two patients using the school's objectives to guide the appropriate selection of patients. Throughout the day, Clinical Educators with collaboration of Clinical Instructors when present conduct an ongoing assessment of learning and provide feedback to the students. Post-conference is provided once or twice a week to practice critical thinking skills of patient cases that they have been taking care of during the day. Lessons Learned: The students are found to be more confident with knowledge and skills gained during rotations. Clinical facility evaluations completed by students at the end of their rotations highlight the student's satisfaction and recommendation for continuation of structured learning. Conclusion: Based on the satisfaction of both students and Clinical Instructors, we have identified need for structured learning during clinical rotations. We acknowledge that more evidence-based practice is necessary to effectively address the needs of nursing and midwifery students throughout the country.

Keywords : Rwanda, clinical rotation, structured learning, critical thinking skills, post-conference

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