Developing Telehealth-Focused Advanced Practice Nurse Educational Partnerships

Authors : Shelley Y. Hawkins

Abstract : Introduction/Background: As technology has grown exponentially in healthcare, nurse educators must prepare Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) graduates with the knowledge and skills in information systems/technology to support and improve patient care and health care systems. APRN's are expected to lead in caring for populations who lack accessibility and availability through the use of technology, specifically telehealth. The capacity to effectively and efficiently use technology in patient care delivery is clearly delineated in the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) and Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) Essentials. However, APRN's have minimal, or no, exposure to formalized telehealth education and lack necessary technical skills needed to incorporate telehealth into their patient care. APRN's must successfully master the technology using telehealth/telemedicine, electronic health records, health information technology, and clinical decision support systems to advance health. Furthermore, APRN's must be prepared to lead the coordination and collaboration with other healthcare providers in their use and application. Aim/Goal/Purpose: The purpose of this presentation is to establish and operationalize telehealth-focused educational partnerships between one University School of Nursing and two health care systems in order to enhance the preparation of APRN NP students for practice, teaching, and/or scholarly endeavors. Methods: The proposed project was initially presented by the project director to selected multidisciplinary stakeholders including leadership, home telehealth personnel, primary care providers, and decision support systems within two major health care systems to garner their support for acceptance and implementation. Concurrently, backing was obtained from key university-affiliated colleagues including the Director of Simulation and Innovative Learning Lab and Coordinator of the Health Care Informatics Program. Technology experts skilled in design and production in web applications and electronic modules were secured from two local based technology companies. Results: Two telehealth-focused APRN Program academic/practice partnerships have been established. Students have opportunities to engage in clinically based telehealth experiences focused on: (1) providing patient care while incorporating various technology with a specific emphasis on telehealth; (2) conducting research and/or evidence-based practice projects in order to further develop the scientific foundation regarding incorporation of telehealth with patient care; and (3) participating in the production of patient-level educational materials related to specific topical areas. Conclusions: Evidence-based APRN student telehealth clinical experiences will assist in preparing graduates who can effectively incorporate telehealth into their clinical practice. Greater access for diverse populations will be available as a result of the telehealth service model as well as better care and better outcomes at lower costs. Furthermore, APRN's will provide the necessary leadership and coordination through interprofessional practice by transforming health care through new innovative care models using information systems and technology.

Keywords : academic/practice partnerships, advanced practice nursing, nursing education, telehealth
Conference Title : ICTTT 2016 : International Conference on Telecare, Telehealth and Telemedicine
Conference Location : Copenhagen, Denmark
Conference Dates : June 27-28, 2016