Introducing Students to Evidence-Based Practice and Quality Measures

Purpose
The overall goal of Quality and Safety Education for Nurses (QSEN) is to address the challenge of preparing future nurses with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KSAs) necessary to continuously improve the quality and safety of the health care systems in which they work (QSEN Institute, n.d.). The Institute of Medicine (2003) and the QSEN Institute both list quality improvement and evidence-based practice as competencies nurses should possess. Introducing nursing students to the concepts of quality measures and evidence-based practice early in the nursing curriculum may assist students in the development of KSAs throughout the nursing program. Therefore, an assignment was developed to introduce students to the concepts of quality measures and evidence-based practice during the first term of the nursing program. The purpose of the assignment is to provide an opportunity for students to use database resources to research evidence related to a quality measure in the nursing home setting and present evidence-based practice interventions to their peers.

Assignment
Students are provided with a list of the current Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Nursing Home Quality Measures (2013) at the beginning of their Foundations course. Each student in a clinical group selects a different quality measure from the list and is given guidelines and a grading rubric for the assignment. The students are provided with an orientation on the use of nursing databases, how to determine whether an article is published in a scholarly journal, and how to retrieve scholarly journal articles by a reference librarian. Students are required to retrieve two articles from a scholarly journal related to their CMS quality measure. The articles can be from other health care disciplines but have to address implementation of resident care that applies to nursing, and the articles must have been published within the past 5 years.

Students prepare a 5- to 10-minute presentation for their clinical group. The presentation takes place on the first clinical day at the nursing home during postconference. The presentation includes: a description of the CMS quality measure, discussion of the importance of the CMS quality measure to the nursing home setting, discussion of the current evidence from the literature related to the CMS quality measure, and discussion of five nursing interventions that address the CMS quality measure. After the presentation, the clinical instructor provides additional information on the CMS quality measure that may not have been presented by students and assists students in clarifying information and answering questions for the clinical group.

In addition, students prepare a handout for their peers in the clinical group. The handout includes key points from the literature related to the CMS quality measure and at least five nursing interventions that address the CMS quality measure. The handout and a copy of the two scholarly articles are turned into the clinical instructor for review. The presentation and handout are graded by the clinical instructor using a rubric.

Benefit
The Nursing Home Quality Measures address concepts taught in the Foundations course. The assignment assists in bridging the gap between theory and practice. The presentations and handouts facilitate the preparation of students to provide quality care for the nursing home residents. Students find the information to be beneficial because they have no clinical experience, and the interventions presented can be applied to resident care during each of their clinical experiences at the nursing home.

References
Sheryl Katherine House, DNP, RN, CNS houses@ohio.edu Ohio University
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