ADDIE Paper

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Introduction

Newly licensed nurses oftentimes experience transition to practice problems that orientation programs seek to minimize. Schools of nursing have developed capstone precepted experiences for senior students which are designed to mitigate some of the transition to practice difficulties and provide their students with an advantage during this time. In the final semester before graduation, students work one-on-one with preceptors, experienced registered nurses (RNs) who provide professional socialization and hands on practice to guide students toward the transition as new to practice nurses. This paper will briefly explore the preceptor role, why education and support are needed to ensure student learning outcomes, as well as discuss a plan to implement the program for novice preceptors. The ADDIE process will be used to create a program that educates and supports novice preceptors working with prelicensure nursing students in their capstone experience. The acronym ADDIE stands for the following five-step process: Assess, Design, Develop, Implement & Evaluate and is a commonly utilized instructional design framework. A Use Case has been developed to outline the process and is complemented by a chart depicting how the program will be piloted. Plans to evaluate the new program after the first semester of implementation will conclude this paper.

Assess

A number of key factors have been identified in the current nursing shortage. The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) found that thousands of qualified applicants are turned away from nursing programs annually in part due to insufficient faculty, lack of clinical sites and an insufficient number of clinical preceptors (AACN Fact Sheet-Nursing Shortage, 2020). The Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated placement issues in clinical

areas and disrupted usual modes of recruiting both adjunct faculty as well as preceptors to support the education and development of prelicensure nursing students (International Council of Nurses, 2021). Nursing programs will need to be innovative in recruiting and retaining preceptors in the current climate. The Use Case outlined in this paper will focus on supports to enhance retention of preceptors working with unlicensed nursing students. Implementation of the education and support system pilot project will likely impact both recruitment and retention of preceptors going forward.

Design

As a practice profession, nurse preceptors are tasked with helping students connect their classroom knowledge to patient care, practice skills and take on the professional attitudes that are required by the nurse of today. Metropolitan Boston area preceptors who work in the role of onboarding new employees generally have a workshop or other training from their hospital designed to improve outcomes for the new hire and there is much in the professional development literature to support this role. By contrast, preceptors working with senior nursing students are volunteers who vary in their educational preparation, with fewer formal resources for developing competency in this role, as well as fewer research studies to inform best practices.

In Massachusetts, guidelines for clinical education experiences have been developed by the Board of Registration in Nursing and are described in 244 CMR 6.04: Standards for Nursing Education Program Approval. These standards speak on a variety of issues including the need for the preceptor to hold a baccalaureate degree in nursing and expertise in the specific clinical area where the student is having the experience. The regulations further identify that program faculty are responsible to coordinate the precepted experience and a level of mentorship between

novice preceptors and faculty from the school could be inferred by the standards (Standards, 1998/2004).

The role of preceptor is a time limited relationship where the registered nurse functions as an educator-facilitator-evaluator to promote the learning of the preceptee/student and aid in achieving learning objectives. It is a personalized one-on-one relationship that differs from mentoring and coaching, although there is overlap among the three processes (Kowalski, 2020). Preceptorships are most commonly used in the students' final semester of undergraduate nursing education, however some have speculated that using earlier in the program would yield even greater improvements in basic skills acquisition and confidence (Oermann et al., 2018, p. 202). Preceptors play key roles in socialization to the profession with both students and preceptors experiencing growth from the relationship (Strouse et al., 2018, p. 21)

As discussed previously, preparation for the preceptor role varies and support given by nursing program also varies. Oermann et al. (2018) noted a "preceptorship preparation acknowledges the need for and commitment to collaboration … and supports the learning needs of preceptors" (p. 206). Topics that can be covered in this preparation can include adult learning theories, conflict resolution, motivating, coaching, time management and providing feedback (Burgess & Mellis, 2015; Oermann et al., 2018). Additional benefits of the preceptor model include networking and role enhancement (Martin et al., 2011, p. 2). Programs that do not offer a formal orientation can result in confusion over the expectations and the role (Wenner et al., 2019, p. 102).

There are a variety of ways to deliver this content: online modules, handbooks, in a face to face meeting or more recently over Zoom. Given that preceptors for nursing students are volunteers, being mindful of the additional time the program expects the registered nurse to

devote to preceptor preparation is in order. One alternative to workshop style training would be a "just in time" approach that involves short videos, document packets, grab and go clinical activities and checklists(Nelson et al., 2019, p. 230). The pilot project developed as part of this paper is another option. A series of brief weekly topics involving clinical education, adult learning, assessment or feedback techniques will be sent to preceptors in a short email. The messages are designed to give "pearls" or tips to preceptors that will provide support or education on clinical matters that will help them grow in their role. Intentionally the messages will be brief, with a QR code linking to additional information if the preceptor has the time and interest in learning more. The messages will also serve as a way for faculty to check in with preceptor and keep communication lines open by being approachable and easily accessible (Chicca & Shellenbarger, 2020, p. E42) Preceptors will be surveyed pre and post intervention using a tool used to evaluate learning in professional development (Sandau et al., 2011, p. 122) to ascertain if any change in their knowledge or confidence has been realized. The Sandau tool uses a 5 point Likert scale and some limited open answer responses.

Student outcomes can be measured in a variety of ways. A post experience survey based on the Preceptor Evaluation Tool developed as part of the NCSBN's Transition to Practice Study (Spector et al., 2015) could be sent to students after their capstone experience. This tool will allow the student to rate their preceptor on a variety of activities using a Likert scale and require very minor modification for use with a student population; this tool has been validated for use with newly licensed registered nurses(Luckenbach et al., 2020).

A number of factors influence the retention of adjunct faculty and it can be inferred that similar points inform retention of preceptors who are volunteers. Motivating factors include "job experiences that participants find satisfying and include achievement, recognition of

achievement, the work itself, responsibility, and growth or advancement"(Woodworth, 2017, p. 295). Studies examining satisfaction with adjunct and preceptor experiences are not well documented in the literature. Although adjunct faculty often work in education as an additional source of employment, a slight nod to the volunteer aspect of undergraduate preceptor could enhance continuation in this role, although this is not documented. Incentives to continue in the role as undergraduate preceptor could include professional development or continuing education opportunities, college credits, preceptor recognition events or small tokens of appreciation (Oermann et al., 2018, p. 213).

Develop

The Use Case that follows was developed to map out the steps involved to implement this project. It attempts to identify the pathways involved in a successful versus failed implementation of the pilot. Use Cases are a project management tool that allows the creator to map out the steps needed and potentially identify areas of risk that need to be addressed.

Use Case

Incorporate a "just-in-time" (JIT) support system for novice RN preceptors working with senior nursing students

ID

UC JIT Support Version 1

Description of Use Case

Registered nurses who volunteer to be preceptors for senior nursing students in their capstone experiences often do not have a background in educational methods, feedback and student evaluation. As these RNs are employees of the hospital and not the SON, providing

education on these topics must be succinct and align with unit workflows. The aim of this use case is to promote JIT education and a support system for preceptors in this role.

Primary Actor

RN volunteer preceptors

Supporting Actors

Nursing students, nursing faculty, clinical coordinator

Stakeholders and Interests

Nursing program administrators, hospital staff and management, students/families paying for education, patients

Pre-Conditions

1. Nursing faculty must see benefit to student experience, program outcomes and retention of preceptors

2. Registered nurses must be willing participants in program

3. Funding for possible incentives/thank you to preceptors is secured

Normal Flow of Events

List in order what the Use Case represents:

Present JIT program to course lead and clinical coordinator; elicit feedback and revise as needed

Upon approval, contact preceptors to complete skills/confidence survey pre-intervention; Students are surveyed re: capstone hopes/expectations at beginning of experience

Create schedule for materials to be delivered to preceptors via email; goal is one topic/week for first 4 weeks, tips on providing formal evaluation week 5; supplemental information provided as needed; structured check ins with preceptors during week 7 and 12

Post Conditions

Success-end condition

Students report a positive learning experience upon completion of their capstone preceptorship

Students achieve their learning outcomes for capstone

Preceptors report a positive experience working with students and increased confidence in their teaching and feedback abilities

Preceptors report the intent to precept during the next group of capstone students

Future employers report graduates are ready to practice

Failure-end Condition

Students report a negative learning experience upon completion of their capstone preceptorship

Students do not achieve their learning outcomes for capstone

Preceptors report a negative experience working with students and continue to feel under prepared for teaching and providing feedback

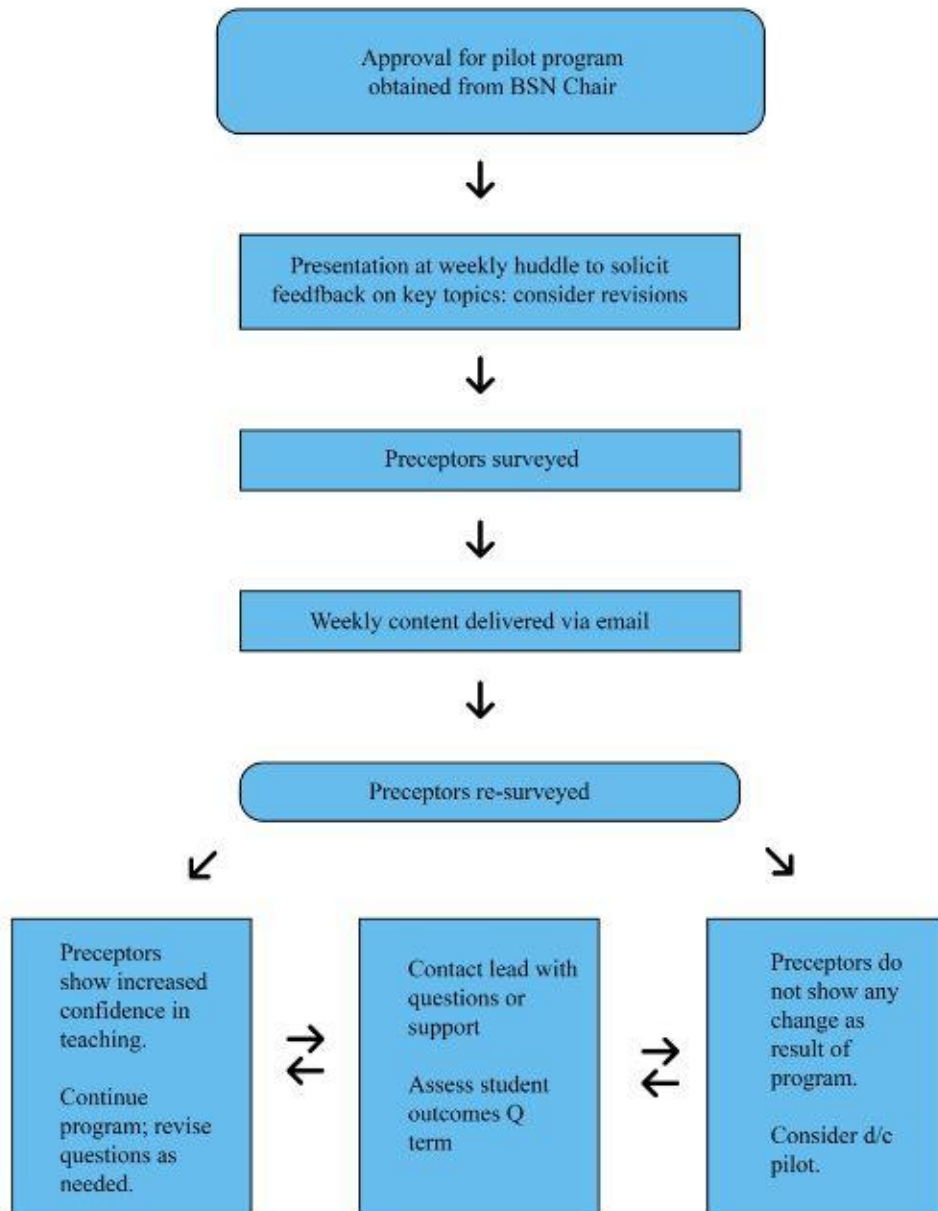Preceptors do not continue precepting students for pilot SON

Future employers report gap in readiness to practice/no discernable difference when comparing this SON graduates with other new to practice nurses

Trigger

Nursing program is amenable to implementing change to current capstone preceptorship

Implementation

Workflow for preceptor support project

Approval for pilot program
obtained from BSN Chair

↓

Presentation at weekly huddle to solicit
feedfback on key topics: consider revisions

↓

Preceptors surveyed

↓

Weekly content delivered via email

↓

Preceptors re-surveyed

↙ ↘

Preceptors
show increased
confidence in
teaching.

Continue
program; revise
questions as
needed.

⇄

Contact lead with
questions or
support

Assess student
outcomes Q
term

⇄

Preceptors do
not show any
change as
result of
program.

Consider d/c
pilot.

Evaluate

A key component of this project involves how to balance the preceptors' need for information with time constraints in busy healthcare settings. In contrast to nurses serving in the preceptor role for new employees, preceptors for nursing students are volunteers. It is unclear what is a realistic expectation regarding time investment for a volunteer endeavor. Traditionally preceptors working with students have indicated that "giving back" to the profession is a primary motivator for volunteering to serve in this role. The voluntary nature of can enhance satisfaction experienced while working with students, since the preceptor can opt out of working with students as opposed to preceptors assigned to the role by leadership. Further study on the motivation of preceptors to take on the role of working with students could provide information that would benefit recruitment efforts.

Wide variance in preceptor preparation has been observed in the literature, with potential impacts on staff turnover, satisfaction, preceptor confidence and enhanced learning outcomes for the preceptee (Sanford & Tipton, 2016; Fordham, 2021). The Use Case developed for this project allows for flexibility in content provided to preceptors that will support them in their role. It is likely that revision of materials sent will be necessary as feedback from participants is provided that will guide topics covered by the project.

Provisions for evaluating outcomes for both preceptor and preceptee have been put in place utilizing validated tools. Inclusion of open-ended responses at the conclusion of the surveys can provide rich sources of information that will enhance the knowledge generated.

An additional source of outcome data can be gleaned by surveying future employers for transition to practice information and comparing graduates from the program involved with the pilot with graduates from other nursing programs. Traditionally there has been a wide gap in

newly licensed nurse readiness to practice from the perspective of academic educators compared to nurse executives, with 90% of educators believing new grads are ready to practice compared to only 10% of executives (Berkow et al., 2009). Admittedly this data is historic and follow-up study will hopefully yield significant narrowing of this practice issue.

Other data that could be generated through this pilot include factors influencing retention of preceptors over time and how best to encourage retention of these crucial volunteers to maintain quality outcomes in the school of nursing. By narrowing the transition to practice gap among program graduates, new to practice nurses attending this program could see enhanced employment opportunities based on program outcomes.

A final factor which was not explored in this pilot would be potential cost savings realized by the school of nursing, impacting both time and money, related to recruitment and onboarding of preceptors. Hospital executives could potentially realize savings related to orientation and retention of new to practice nurses as a result of enhanced preceptorship programs.

Conclusion

Nursing programs are facing increasing competition for clinical placements and experiences for students including one-on-one capstone preceptorships. Creation of an easy to administer program to educate and support clinical preceptor volunteers has the potential to enhance learning and practice outcomes for students while containing administrative costs to the school of nursing. Enhancing the skills of new to practice nurses who comprise over 10% of most hospitals' staff (Berkow et al., 2009) will ultimately result in improved quality and safety for patients.

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