QSEN Initiative

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Introduction

Quality and Safety Education for Nurses (QSEN) was incorporated into the baccalaureate nursing program at the University of St. Francis in 2010. Knowing this would be additional work for the faculty and students, the faculty created a project assignment filled with anticipation.

Once some of the discoveries were shared with the Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) of the area medical center, the CNO requested that the presentations take place at the medical center. This allowed for information sharing with the hospital staff.

Procedures

Each clinical faculty member teamed up with their clinical group to identify a potential or actual problem related to quality of care. Each of the six groups was assigned to one of the six QSEN competencies.

The students utilized evidence based practice to in order delineate an appropriate project. Any data collection involved collaboration with the instructor and staff as well as observation of practice.

The faculty encouraged the students to keep their project ‘secret’ so there would be a surprise element to the presentation day. Since the QSEN project was not built into the grade, the faculty made it a contest with prizes and judges. The judges were two QSEN faculty champions.

A judging rubric was designed by the course coordinator and shared with the students. A potluck and prizes were included to create a festive feeling. Prizes included Starbucks gift cards for the group in first place and Dunkin Donuts gift cards for the group in second place. A ‘QSEN closet’ was created for the other groups. The QSEN closet was made up of all kinds of treasures taken out of the faculty’s closets (candles, frames, etc.). The groups were able to choose prizes in the order of their placement in the competition.

Collaborative learning took place within the groups as well as between the groups when they were able to present the findings to their peers. The project utilized a form of service learning in which the students created a culture to enhance patient care (Christiansen, Robson, & Griffith-Evans, 2010).

Results

Students had the opportunity to become engaged in an active learning project that could actually be used to contribute to patient safety outcomes.

Students came to realize that the QSEN projects were far more than ‘busy work’. They were actually contributing to the quality improvement of the medical center.

Students learned the value of follow-up research, and the importance of collaboration, teamwork, and sharing findings with others.

Hospital administrators came to realize that the students had a lot to offer, and contributed ideas and data that translated into opportunities for quality improvement. The hospital clinical education department realized that some of their own risk management implementations were not fool-proof.

Conclusion

Additional work was added to the semester in such a manner as to make it fun. The students enjoyed the secrecy, the competition, the potluck, and the prizes. The first semester projects paved the way for the integration of QSEN into the nursing program. The following semester, the QSEN projects became more formalized and a percentage was incorporated into their final course grade.

Subsequent presentations took place at the medical center, allowing for the sharing of information with the facility from which it was collected.

The QSEN projects have drawn attention to the value of student observations and ideas. The hospital administrators are listening to the presentations and taking notes.

In order to continue building the collaboration between the students and the seasoned professionals at the medical center, the following next steps should be taken:

• Have the hospital administrators communicate what interventions they have implemented or have planned based on the student findings. This would be reinforcing for the students to know that their observations are being utilized and acted on.
• Have the hospital managers work with the students to suggest potential projects for the future.

References
