



CNS/NP Collaborative Practicum Experience: An Innovative Educational Approach


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Background




- Today's patients are complex
 - Innovative best practice healthcare models required
 - Disruption of traditional healthcare education methods required
- IOM recommended interprofessional teams - 2001
- Healthcare education programs answered call for IPE
 - IPE course content and clinical experiences
- What about INTRAprofessional collaboration
 - Within schools of nursing
 - Graduate programs
 - APNs



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The Student Experience

- 8 hour drive across VA:
 - Not intended to be part of learning experience
 - Team reported:
 - Engaging in rich dialogue
 - Could not have been replicated in classroom or discussion forum
 - Got to know each other
 - Explained unique preparation, competencies, and responsibilities of their roles
 - NP not fully aware of CNS competencies and preparation
 - Despite years of experience as RN



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The Student Experience



- Upon arrival at clinic:
 - Able to identify different, yet complimentary, skills of the CNS and NP
 - NP quickly began providing high level care focusing on diagnosis, tx, health promotion & management
 - CNS began analysis of clinic, community, & population that clinic serves

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The Student Experience

- NP realized need for extended teaching
 - Diabetes management and healthy living
 - Most patients traveled over 1hour "off of the mountain"
 - Unable to make frequent visits
 - Medications and supplies to manage diabetes provided
 - Patients unable to access healthy fruits and vegetables
 - Closest grocery store over 1 hour

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The Student Experience

- Staff felt CNS should lead diabetes education program
- Beginning with phone contact to schedule education session
- 150 identified community members
 - Student reached 7 able to come to clinic
- Student began conducting informal survey
 - To determine why community members could not attend
 - Common themes included:
 - Need to care for family member
 - Lack of transportation
 - Conflicting work schedules

**HAVE NO FEAR...
THE CLINICAL NURSE
SPECIALIST
IS HERE**

The Student Experience

- Student team identified typical wait time to see NP as opportunity for CNS to begin educating on:
 - Disease management
 - Healthy living
 - Community resources
- "Tag-team" approach worked well
- CNS able to:
 - Assist patient
 - Gather valuable concise info during educational session
 - Provide info to NP, aiding in facilitation of appointment

“Coming together is the beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together... is success.”
— Henry Ford

Outcomes

- Students reported:
 - Increased levels of understanding of APN roles & scope of practice
 - Experience was "invaluable"
 - Exposed brokenness & great needs that exist within their own state
 - Calling to return to clinic or similar settings upon graduation
 - Volunteer basis


Outcomes

- CNS student had not considered returning to rural roots:
 - Articulated new desire to practice in rural community setting
 - Original plan of working in urban acute care setting
- Experience enabled students to develop programs:
 - Utilizing expertise inherent in each role
 - Addressing pressing rural healthcare needs
- Several students since collaborated in clinical based research projects

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Conclusion and Next Steps

- Students & faculty realized richness of experience
- Outcomes could not have occurred without intraprofessional partnership
- Healthcare needs to embrace new models of care
 - Intraprofessional work essential
 - CNS/NP partnership can provide powerful vehicle for change



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Conclusion and Next Steps

- Additional rural community-based settings located
- Each student must have at least 1 partnering experience before graduation
 - 1 team per semester
- Goal = deliverable for each site
 - Can be continued by next student team

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Remote Area Medical Clinic Experience

- Final data analysis still underway
- Preliminary data = vast majority preferred written material to take home vs. classroom or online
- Findings used by next student team to tailor an educational program
- Fits the needs of the population based on interest & availability
- Student team & faculty published article in VNA quarterly newsletter

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Intraprofessional Experience Implications



- Increase awareness of:
 - APN roles
 - Scope of practice
 - Avenues for future collaboration
- Enable APNs to provide cost-effective, patient-centered quality services



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Intraprofessional Experience Implications

- Meant to bridge healthcare gaps for vulnerable populations
- Must be placed early in programs
- Must be focused
- May be expanded to include all APN student roles
- Sustainable model for intraprofessional advanced practice clinical education
- Easily replicated by other schools


**PUTTING THE
PIECES TOGETHER**


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