RURAL TELEHEALTH: ENHANCING THE ACADEMIC-PRACTICE PARTNERSHIP FOR APRN EDUCATION

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OBJECTIVES

1. Discuss telehealth competencies for family nurse practitioner students and advanced practice preceptors.
   - Identify the proficiency needed for use of telehealth equipment.

2. Discuss essential components of a telehealth curriculum for family nurse practitioner students and advanced practice preceptors.
   - Describe knowledge needed for telehealth practice.
   - Recognize the phases of telehealth competency needed for family nurse practitioner clinical education.
   - Identify a clinical partner to assist in education and training of family nurse practitioner students and advanced practice preceptors.
BACKGROUND: TELEHEALTH IN RURAL SETTINGS

- Increase access to care
- Connect patients to primary healthcare providers
- Increase access to preventative services
- Consult with specialists
- Increase continuity of care
- Improve patient outcomes
- Reduce disparities between rural and urban residents
- Address the Institute for Healthcare Improvement Triple Aim: Better health, better healthcare, and lower costs
WHY EDUCATE NURSE PRACTITIONERS ON TELEHEALTH?

- Rapid advances in technology.
- Nurse practitioners may practice in rural and underserved communities.
- These areas are remote and providers may not have access to consultants for challenging cases.
- The novice nurse practitioner may not feel confident in their ability to manage complex acute and chronic disease processes upon entry into practice.
- Many components require explicit education to provide safe, effective, ethical, cultural, and legal patient care.
  - Licensing
  - Credentialing
  - Skills
  - Managing patients remotely
WHY INCORPORATE TELEHEALTH INTO CURRICULUM?

- Informatics is an AACN essential of graduate nursing education.
- Telehealth was not a robust curricular component.
- Telehealth was not an intentional clinical placement for nurse practitioner students.
- An opportunity to shape curriculum and provide leadership in the development of technology-enhanced practice for nurse practitioners.
- Nurse practitioner students were interviewing for positions that use telehealth in the practice without receiving the education and skills needed to achieve competency.
CURRENT ACADEMIC-PRACTICE PARTNERSHIPS

- Existing collaboration with regional healthcare organizations to provide clinical experience for nurse practitioner students.

- A need was identified by a clinical partner to develop/enhance a standardized orientation for providers regarding telehealth modalities.
  - Increase provider comfort
  - Increase telehealth utilization
  - Enhance patient outcomes
Established to:

- Increase nurse practitioner student experience with telehealth modalities.
- Increase pre-licensure knowledge and competency of nurse practitioner students.
- Develop modules to assist providers to gain additional knowledge of telehealth.
- Increase provider comfort and confidence in the delivery of telehealth.
- Enhance patient outcomes for rural residents.
Literature search to determine curriculum and competencies.

- No best practices emerged
- No competencies for family nurse practitioners located

Development of a core faculty team.

- Teach in nurse practitioner practicums
- Educators with knowledge of curriculum concepts
- Have experience utilizing telehealth

Development of an Advisory Board.

- Community group comprised of providers, administrators, regulatory agencies, and insurance representatives to guide development and implementation of curriculum.
DEVELOPMENT OF COMPETENCIES

- Introductory concepts
- Billing
- Rural health considerations
- Urban health considerations
- Legislation
- Licensure considerations
- Insurance considerations
- Establishing a professional presence on camera
- Future trends
Current didactic and clinical course concepts reviewed.

Telehealth concepts aligned with similar content taught in the practicum courses.

Curriculum increases in complexity as the students progress.

Simulation-based learning experiences.

- Reviewed content in the telehealth curriculum as well as practicum content to determine appropriate simulation experiences.
- Follows the curriculum and clinical experience to increase in complexity.

Clinical placement of students.

- Intentional placement in sites that utilize telehealth.
- Collaboration with clinical partner to determine appropriate sites and locations.
EVALUATION OF CURRICULUM

- Pre and post surveys to measure student competency.
  - Self assessment data.
- Number of sites with preceptor use of telehealth.
- Number of telehealth visits students engaged in with their preceptor.
CHALLENGES

- **Site Visits**
  - Academic institutions did not want faculty from another school to visit simulation centers.

- **Curriculum**
  - Nurse practitioner curriculum was full prior to the addition of telehealth concepts.
  - Telehealth is not tested on the certification exams.
  - Students may not see a need for this if their provider preceptors do not use.
  - Medical emergency prevented a fall visit from consultant to help with curriculum development.

- **Simulation Experience**
  - Issues with firewalls.
  - Microphones are very sensitive.
  - Need to disconnect the stethoscope to avoid reverberation.
CHALLENGES

- **Equipment**
  - Multiple pieces of equipment available from multiple vendors.
  - Shipping issues

- **Training**
  - Faculty needed to be trained on equipment prior to student training.
  - Campuses are separated by more than 400 miles.

- **Preceptor placement**
  - New clinical sites
  - Telehealth visits may not occur daily
  - Limited number of provider preceptors who use telehealth.
ACHIEVEMENTS

- **Curriculum**
  - Integrated into 3 practicum courses.
  - Students able to discuss telehealth concepts after the courses.

- **Training**
  - 11 faculty trained on the equipment.
  - Able to effectively teach equipment use to students for simulation in the Spring 2016.

- **Equipment purchased and set-up at 3 sites.**
  - Brookings
  - Rapid City
  - Sioux Falls
ACHIEVEMENTS

- Simulation
  - Fall simulation was adapted into hands-on training
  - Spring simulation included first and third practicum nurse practitioner students
  - NP students demonstrated understanding of equipment use and telehealth principles
  - NP students appeared on camera in a professional manner
ACHIEVEMENTS

- **Preceptors**
  - 7 students were able to utilize telehealth in their preceptored clinical experiences.

- **Consultant**
  - Assisted in creation of competencies and curriculum.
  - Site visit June 2016 to assist in development of preceptor modules.

- **Continued Learning Opportunities**
  - Faculty team attended national conferences to learn about practices in other academic and healthcare institutions.
  - Dissemination
WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

- Development of preceptor modules.
- Addition to undergraduate curriculum?
- Simulation between interprofessional programs and colleges?
- Simulation between different campuses to allow connection across the state?
- Continue to expand curriculum based on the needs and changes within the healthcare system.


QUESTIONS?