Qualitative Evaluation of RN-BSN Student Progress

Linda Westbrook, PhD, RN, Jerelyn Resnick, PhD, RN
Lena Hristova, RN, MN, Anna Sterner, RN, MN

Overview of Presentation:
This poster will provide information about an innovative strategy to generate information on RN-BSN student progress throughout the program using narrative self-reports. Prompted by a list of competencies developed by faculty, students provide written examples of their progress toward their achievement. The qualitative responses were transcribed and analyzed using directed content analysis. Procedures and summary of results will be provided.

Purpose: The purpose of this evaluation strategy was to gather more specific student outcome data to assist faculty in making individual course and overall curriculum improvements to an RN-BSN Program.

Description: Nursing programs routinely generate quantitative data on student outcomes based on course evaluations and grades. These data generally satisfy accreditation standards, but do little to help faculty in the continuous quality improvement process. Faculty wanted to determine if the RN-BSN students were able to incorporate the concepts and skills they were learning in the classroom directly into their clinical practice. To address this question, faculty proposed to elicit student reports of their own progress throughout the program.

Data Collection and Analysis: Twelve competency statements that aligned with program goals and a written questionnaire were developed. At the end of each quarter, students were asked to report their progress toward achieving selected competencies. Students wrote behaviorally oriented examples from their own practice or classroom experience that illustrated growth toward achieving the competencies. Students were encouraged to keep copies of their responses to track their own progress toward achieving the program outcomes and to use to prepare their end of program portfolio essay. In addition, these data were transcribed by course and competency and shared directly with the faculty. Faculty have used these data to identify strengths and weaknesses in their courses and to make targeted improvements. In addition, the data have been analyzed using directed content analysis using Bloom’s (Anderson & Krathwohl et. al., 2001) taxonomy of educational objectives in the cognitive and affective learning domains as a framework.

Evaluation: Preliminary data analysis indicates that student growth can be characterized using the verbs associated with the specific levels in the cognitive and affective domains. The next step will be to move this process online. Specific procedures and forms used for data collection and a summary of the results will be shared.
Bibliography includes, but it not limited to: