

An Innovative Pilot Study Exploring a General Medical Practice Setting as a Learning Experience for Nursing Students.

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BACKGROUND

The Chief Nursing Officer for Scotland's 2030 Vision is to shape the future of the Scottish nursing workforce to meet the needs of contemporary health and social care (Scottish Government, 2017a). It is projected that people aged 75 and over are the fastest growing age group in Scotland with an expected increase of 27% over the next ten years and by 79% over the following 25 years (Scottish Government, 2017b). Furthermore, older people are more likely to have more than one long term health condition with 27% of people aged 75-84 having two or more (Scottish Government 2009). General Practice Nurses (GPN) are part of the multi-disciplinary team who provide collaborative care and support for people with long term conditions (The Health and Social Care Alliance, 2018). Currently over half (53%) of all nurses in general practice are aged 50 years and over (The Scottish Government, 2017a). Historically student nurse placements have been predominantly focussed within the acute and community sector (Willis Report, 2012). In response to this and the changing health and social care landscape it is vital that nurses take on new ways of working in a wide range of settings including general practice. This pilot offers student nurses a unique learning experience working alongside a practice nurse and the wider general practice team.



AIMS

- To offer a pre-registration nursing student a practice learning experience within a GP practice.
- To provide a pre-registration nursing student a vision of a career pathway into practice nursing.
- To develop skills and competence in preparation for a career in practice nursing.

METHOD

After the initial meeting between Barns Medical Practice and UWS an educational audit was required in accordance with protocol for clinical areas wishing to support a pre-registration nursing student on placement. The educational audit ensures the students and organisations who support them understand their responsibilities and expectations in relation to practice placement learning (NHS Education for Scotland (NES) 2008). Furthermore, the standards support a positive learning environment that promotes healthcare professionals to deliver safe and effective person-centred care.

In line with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) (2008) the lead nurse was required to undertake and complete a mentorship module at UWS and was supervised in her mentor role by the Liaison Lecturer from UWS with added support from the Practice Education Facilitator.

UWS sought interest from all third year adult nursing students for this pilot. Interested students were asked to provide a 250 word supportive statement. A timetable of learning was set together between the mentor and student and the following table illustrates some of the skills that were made available to the nursing student under the guidance and supervision of the mentor.

Table 1 Potential Clinical Skills

| | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Womens health clinic | Cronic disease management |
| Sexual Health Clinic | Venepuncture |
| Family planning/ Reproductive clinics | Wound Management |
| Postnatal Checks | Diabetes Management |
| Newborn Vaccination clinics | Palliative Care |
| Paediatric Consultations | Family/Carer Support |
| Mental Health Support | Consultation Skills |
| Travel Vaccinations | Time Management of Appointments |
| ECGs Spirometry and 24Hr BP Monitoring | Consultations by Telephone |
| Near testing INR Service | Assisting with minor Surgery |

FINDINGS

Key Findings from this Pilot.

- Increased knowledge and understanding of the GPN role.
- Enhanced student skills around health promotion, wound management, infection control and patients with long term health conditions.
- Development of team working skills, confidence and communication.
- Partnership/collaboration with UWS, NHS Ayrshire and Arran and Barns Medical Practice.
- Student nurse successful in securing GPN training post within the practice, funded by NES (2018).
- Pilot met the aims of the Chief Nursing Officers' Transforming Roles Project (NES 2018).
- Future opportunity for clinical placements within the General Practice setting.

CONCLUSION

It is clear from this pilot that placement experiences with practice nursing teams within GP medical practices can offer nursing students high quality learning opportunities, exposure to a wide range of clinical skills, multi-professional team working and an insight to a possible career in practice nursing.

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