



Improving student learning in mental health settings: The views of clinical stakeholders

Michelle Cleary ^{a,*}, Jan Horsfall ^b, Paul De Carlo ^a

^a Sydney South West Area Mental Health Service (Eastern Zone), P.O. Box 1, Rozelle, NSW 2039, Australia

^b University of Western Sydney Macarthur, Division of Nursing, Faculty of Health, Australia

Accepted 20 November 2005

KEYWORDS

Mental health nursing;
Education;
Clinical supports;
Recruitment;
Retention

Summary In this study, individual semi-structured interviews with key nursing staff were undertaken across a metropolitan mental health service in Sydney, Australia to ascertain their views, knowledge and experiences in regard to the development of nursing programmes for nurses new to mental health nursing, trainee enrolled nurse programmes and undergraduate placements. Interview topics were based on information obtained from a survey of nurses participating in these programmes, a review of the literature, consultation with senior nurses and exit interviews. The interviews were analysed for recurring themes to increase understanding of factors that facilitate satisfaction. These findings are valuable for health administrators, nurse educators and clinical support staff and may contribute to the development of 'better practice' in the areas of recruitment and retention and nurse education.
© 2005 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Introduction

In the past decade, cutbacks, downsizing and the restructuring of services have all impacted on the clinical experiences of mental health nursing students during placements and rotations (Melrose, 2002; O'Brien, 1994). Nursing staff must adapt to these new realities to facilitate student learning and promote confidence and the development of positive attitudes (Bell et al., 1998; Fisher, 2002).

However, there are continuing concerns in Australia about the failure to provide positive student placements and attracting nurses to the mental health field (Clinton and Hazelton, 2000a,b,c; Happell, 1998; Happell and Rushworth, 2000; O'Brien, 1994, 1995; Stevens and Dulhunty, 1997).

Nursing education aims to train student nurses to become capable, competent and knowledgeable nursing professionals (Lau et al., 2002; Munnukka et al., 2002). It is therefore important that a positive clinical learning environment be created to facilitate the integration of theoretical knowledge into clinical practice (Lau et al., 2002). Nursing education programmes that reflect student learning needs, incorporate current mental health nursing

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +61 2 9556 9493; fax: +61 2 9818 5712.

E-mail address: michelle.cleary@email.cs.nsw.gov.au.

knowledge and are based on best practice have the potential to improve nurses' professional identity and workplace satisfaction (Theobald and Mitchell, 2002). This requires a systematic and collaborative approach between clinical, administrative, education and research partners (Elliott, 2002; Macdonald, 2002). Identifying learning opportunities and creating an environment that supports learning and quality education requires the establishment of links between nursing students, the education sector and the various registered nurses (RNs) who teach students in the clinical setting (Drennan, 2002).

Despite the growing interest in education and clinical placements, there is limited research from a clinical perspective that incorporates the knowledge, views and experiences of key stakeholders (e.g., nurse administrators, educators, facilitators and preceptors) as to how to further develop and consolidate contemporary clinical learning in mental health settings. In mental health nursing, research is mainly related to attitudes, specialty preferences and student satisfaction and evaluation (e.g., Cleary and Happell, 2005a,b; Happell, 1999; Melrose and Shapiro, 1999; Mullen and Murray, 2002; O'Brien, 1995; Stevens and Dulhunty, 1997). Further research is warranted, given the centrality of clinical nurses in providing positive placement experiences that may contribute to enhanced student learning, satisfaction with placement and promotion of student interest in mental health nursing (Cleary and Happell, 2005a; Durkin, 2002; Kalischuk and Thorpe, 2002; Munnukka et al., 2002). It is against this backdrop that the present study was developed to ascertain the views, knowledge and experiences of key stakeholders involved in student education programmes.

Methodology

Ethical issues/approval

The study was approved by the Area Research Committee and the Area Health Service Ethics Review Committee.

The setting

Sydney South West Area Mental Health Service (Eastern Zone) (SSWAMHS), in New South Wales, Australia, provides mental health services to suburbs of Central and Inner Western Sydney which has a multicultural population of 500 000. Mental health nursing specialties include: acute care, cri-

sis intervention, drug and alcohol, aboriginal mental health, child and adolescent mental health, rehabilitation and recovery, eating disorders, psychiatry of old age, community based care, and consultation and liaison.

Nursing programs

SSWAMHS provides mental health learning opportunities for registered nurses in the Transition Programme into Mental Health Nursing (TPMHNs), Trainee Enrolled Nurses (TENs) and undergraduate nurses (UGNs). The one year TPMHN offers both theoretical and practice based learning in mental health nursing, including four weeks education, one week of critical incident training and opportunities for participation in other in-service sessions. Supports are provided by clinical facilitators and preceptors. Four three-month clinical rotations provide an overview of specialties within mental health nursing. Successful completion of the programme provides credit points towards the Graduate Diploma in Mental Health Nursing offered by the University of Technology, Sydney.

Rozelle Hospital is a teaching hospital within the Area Mental Health Service that offers clinical placements to TENs as an elective speciality (mental health) rotation within the State Department of Health Trainee Enrolled Nurse training programme. Rotations vary from three to seven weeks. An on-site Clinical Nurse Consultant and Human Resource Nurse Manager provide formal orientation, ongoing education and clinical facilitation.

Finally, clinical placements are offered across the academic year to UGNs from seven universities in New South Wales. These placements range from three to seven weeks and include second and third year students. Placement areas include in-patient, community and child and adolescent services. Most universities provide a clinical facilitator to support students in the setting.

Aims of the study

The general aim of this study was to ascertain the views, knowledge and experiences of key RNs involved in the above student and RN education programmes. More specifically, the research aims were to: investigate the factors that facilitate and impede nurse learning; investigate RN employees' perception of their role in regard to student learning; and, determine the main areas for improvement.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/367775>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/367775>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)