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Preparing for Organizational Change in Home Health Care With Simulation-Based Training

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KEYWORDS

training design; vocational training; simulation-based training; telecare training; telecare implementation; organizational change; home health care services

Abstract

Background: Simulation has been suggested as a suitable approach to train home health care professionals for telecare practice. The potentials in using simulation to prepare organizations and staff for telecare implementation are however unexplored.

Methods: A collaborative action research approach involving key stakeholders from two home health care organizations was used to develop a simulation-based telecare training program for home health care professionals.

Results and Conclusion: The collaborative approach to simulation-based training design described here can facilitate genuine stakeholder participation in the development of training objectives, methods and content which will best respond to real staff needs, as well as local organizational conditions and concerns associated with telecare implementation.

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Telecare is the use of technology by health care professionals to remotely provide care and support for individuals living at home. An example is the use of real-time audio-visual communication devices to undertake virtual home health care visits. There is a growing recognition that health care professionals need specialized knowledge, skills, and attitudes to provide safe and effective telecare services. Training for health care professionals to develop necessary telecare competencies is increasingly regarded as a prerequisite for the adoption of telecare among home health care staff and thus a fundamental part of successful telecare implementation in home health care organizations (Clark & McGee-Lennon, 2011; Cresswell, Bates, & Sheikh, 2013; Jennett, Yeo, Pauls, & Graham, 2003; Zanaboni & Wootton, 2012). Research has, however, noted that staff seldom receive formal training before the implementation of telecare in home health care services (Brewster, Mountain, Wessels, Kelly, & Hawley, 2014; Guise, Anderson, & Wiig, 2014). A literature review on telecare training initiatives by Basu et al. (2010) identified only ten such courses, where only two were aimed at home health care staff (Atack, Luke, & Sanderson, 2004; Kobb, Lane, & Stallings, 2008). This dearth of research on education and

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training for telecare practice means that there is a lack of knowledge on the type of training needed to best foster the skills and understanding necessary for sound telecare practice (Basu et al., 2010) and organizational preparation for changes to service provision.

Key Points

- The use of simulation to prepare home health care staff for telecare practice has been unexplored.
- Collaborative training design can promote successful implementation and outcomes of training.
- The processes involved in simulation-based training can prepare organizations for telecare use.

Simulation has been suggested as a suitable pedagogical approach in connection with the introduction of new technologies (Aggarwal et al., 2010) and changing work processes (Ruohomäki, 2003) in health care organizations. A small number of studies have indeed found simulation to be a useful approach for introducing preregistration nursing students to telecare and teaching them remote monitoring and care in various community care settings (Benhuri, 2010; Reierson, Solli, & Bjørk, 2015; Tschetter, Lubeck, &

Fahrenwald, 2013). However, there has been no reported use of simulation in vocational telecare training for home health care staff (Basu et al., 2010), despite frequent use of simulation-based training to impart clinical skills of relevance to telecare practice, including advanced interpersonal and communication skills, enhanced assessment and decision-making abilities, and a person-centered approach to care. As far as we can ascertain, therefore, the potentials in using simulation to prepare home health care organizations and staff for telecare practice are unexplored. The aim of this article is to describe the design and development of a simulation-based telecare training program for qualified health care professionals working in home health care services, as part of an action research study. Insight into this particular collaborative process may be of use to others interested in using simulation to prepare home health care organizations and their staff for the implementation of telecare.

Designing and Developing Training Systematically

The systematic design and development of organizational training initiatives such as vocational telecare training for health care professionals is important to best ensure the utility and relevancy of training programs and to enhance the transfer of learning to practice (Salas, Tannenbaum, Kraiger, & Smith-Jentsch, 2012). While research on design and development of telecare training is scarce, there is a

considerable body of research on best practice in methodical design and development of organizational training initiatives, including simulation-based training (Salas et al., 2008). The systematic design and development of training is largely about identifying specific training objectives, defining and developing necessary training content, and otherwise preparing the organization for the implementation of training (Salas & Cannon-Bowers, 2004).

To ensure that training objectives and associated training content are relevant to trainees' needs, a thorough training needs analysis should be conducted before the design and development stage. The aim of this analysis is to understand who the intended trainees are, the nature and organizational context of their work, and what learning needs they may have associated with intended new job tasks (Coultas, Grossmann, & Salas, 2006; Salas et al., 2012). Findings on trainee characteristics and relevant job tasks and any specific competencies required to accomplish these tasks are translated into clearly defined training objectives with detailed expectations of what skills and abilities trainees are anticipated to acquire from training; the conditions under which task performance is to take place; and the anticipated level of acceptable performance (Coultas et al., 2006).

Establishing targeted training objectives is moreover important to guide decisions on which instructional strategies and educational methods to use during training (Salas & Cannon-Bowers, 2004). Instructional strategies are a set of tools, methods, and content that together create an effective instructional approach and encourage learning (Salas & Cannon-Bowers, 2001). Instructional strategies should be chosen based on their ability to facilitate learning relevant to the concepts, tasks, and competencies described in the training objectives (Coultas et al., 2006). Furthermore, to ensure that training emphasizes learning, training design should be based on sound learning theories and be informed by relevant training frameworks where applicable (Salas & Cannon-Bowers, 2004). Learning through simulation is an active, experiential process that demands self-directed and self-motivated trainees able to critically reflect on their actions and experiences and make connections between and among concepts (Jeffries, 2005). A theoretical approach often applied to simulation-based training initiatives, therefore, is adult learning theory (Clapper, 2010; Kaakinen & Arwood, 2009).

The main assumptions of adult learning theory are that adults are active, independent, and highly motivated learners driven by a need to acquire specific knowledge and skills, often in the aid of solving a predefined practical problem or task (Knowles, Holton & Swanson, 2015). As self-directed participants in the learning process, adult learners are likely to take responsibility for their own learning by actively evaluating and reflecting on learning needs, training activities, and whether desired learning has been achieved. In this view, educators are facilitators of trainees' active construction of learning (Clapper, Download English Version:

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