

47th world congress on

NURSING AND HEALTHCARE

August 22-23, 2018 Singapore

A qualitative study: Learning experience of care plan writing for clinical practice among undergraduate nursing students

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Background: Nursing care plan is a well-known tool in nursing education and clinical practice. It is useful to design a comprehensive plan for clinical judgment using the nursing process that includes assessment, goal-setting, implementation and evaluation. Since nursing care plan can benefit patient outcomes and inter-professional communication, the skills and practice of writing care plan are emphasized in current nursing education. However, little is known about the experience of writing care plan for clinical practice among undergraduate nursing students.

Method: A phenomenological qualitative study was conducted using purposive sampling. The focus group of 3-5 participants interviewed 4 groups was performed at an educational institution. Purposive sampling was used. The open-ended questions were used to allow participants to freely express their feelings. Data saturation was applied to determine the sample size. Colaizzi's method was adopted for analysis.

Results: There were 15 participants joined in this study. Based on their experiences on writing care plan in classroom, there were 4 major themes identified including advanced skill development, preparation for clinical practice, building up confidence on clinical performance and difficulties between reality and theory. Students expressed that care plan writing was useful to enhance knowledge and skills as well as to prepare clinical practice. However, some barriers can affect the application of care plan in clinical settings.

Conclusion: The results increase the insights of nurse educators to guide students from writing nursing care plan in classroom to its application in clinical settings. More support from clinical supervisors can also improve writing and application of nursing care plan effectively in clinical settings among nursing students. Further research can be conducted to verify and compare the effectiveness of nursing care plan in clinical practice among various nursing schools.

Biography

Li Woon Ting Rachel is a nursing student studying Bachelor's Degree of Health Sciences (Major in Nursing) at Tung Wah College in Hong Kong

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