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Online, blended or face-to-face, how should we teach clinical skills in undergraduate nurse education?

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Traditional teaching methods in higher education have achieved much success and have a proven track record of graduate attainment. Contemporary online and blended learning teaching methods have less supporting evidence of success due to their emergent state of development. Increased pressure is being placed on nurse educators by HEI policy-makers and curriculum developers to introduce full online learning into nurse education. This decision to introduce online or blended learning has sometimes been driven by economics and logistics; instead the decision to implement should be a more balanced approach with consideration given to the strength and limitation of each teaching modality. Therefore, consideration needs to be given to how best to support educators and students to engage with online and blended learning techniques. The aim of this paper is to explore the evidence available for clinical skills teaching in undergraduate nursing and determine whether online or blended learning approaches are effective in this aspect of nurse education. Mixed methods systematic literature review is used in methodology. Nineteen papers were identified and the synthesis of findings focused on four areas: performance, knowledge, self-efficacy and user satisfaction. The results of this review suggest that online learning for teaching clinical skills is no less effective than traditional face to face teaching. This presents an opportunity for nurse educators to be creative and develop a variety of teaching modalities that can effectively deliver high quality learning for nursing students.

Biography

Karen McCutcheon is a Senior Lecturer (Education) in the field of Adult Nursing and is the Academic Lead for practice at Queen's University Belfast. She is widely regarded as a Lead Nurse in Ophthalmic and Perioperative Care and is the Editor of the *Journal of Perioperative Practice* and is a Clinical Section Editor for the *British Medical Journal*. She has recently completed a Doctorate in Nursing Practice and her main area of research interest is the use of innovative technology in Nurse Education.

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