

A comparison of nursing skill competency among internationally educated nurses

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Abstract

Background: The United States (US) will soon face the largest shortage of registered nurses (RNs) to date. In the state of California, 100,000 nurses will be needed by the year 2030 primarily due to the burgeoning older population. Nearly 20% of RNs in California were educated outside of the United States. In response to the need for further education, condensed courses are offered year round to internationally educated nurses (IENs) with a focus on an assessment of skill competency. The purpose of this presentation is to describe a skills competency review and an assessment procedure for IENs enrolled in a medical-surgical course at Dominican University.

Methods: Twelve IENs participated in the competency review and assessment procedure as part of the lab component of a Foundations of Professional Nursing in the USA course. Instructors randomly assigned students to a station that involved 4 skills on a manikin patient. Each student was scored by a test monitor using a scoring rubric. Students then had 20 hours of lab time to review rubrics, watch videos, and practice. Students then had a posttest at the same station with the same test monitor. Results: Prior to the course, scores were low with many of the IENs unable to complete the skills stations. A significant improvement occurred in scores for 14 of the 16 skills when students were tested at the conclusion of the medical-surgical nursing course under the same conditions. Conclusion/Next steps: Conducting the competency review and assessment procedure was useful for faculty to determine a baseline from which to provide practice sessions to the IENs.

Nurses who immigrate or return to the US after attaining a nursing degree can benefit from reviewing common medical surgical skills prior to assuming a position in an acute care setting.

Biography:

Dr. Fink has been an RN for 30 years working in a variety of adult care settings. She completed her Ed.D at the University of San Francisco, her master's degree at San Francisco State University, and her bachelor of science in nursing at Dominican University where she now teaches. She has taught at Dominican University for the past 20 years. Her most recent passion is in working with internationally educated nurses and she has been directing the University's IEN Program for 5 years. She is constantly learning from the IENs and making modifications for Program improvement.

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