EBP and Patient Safety: Using PDAs in Nursing Education Classes  
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**Problem**  
Undergraduate nursing students can benefit from using technology such as hand held devices called Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) if used during their nursing education. Evidence supports students who use PDAs believe the devices help them find information quickly and easily thus leading to practice changes which promote safe quality patient care.

**Evidence**  
Research determined PDA technology use is effective in enhancing critical thinking while reinforcing core knowledge for practice (Kupier, 2008; McCausland, Curran, & Cataldi, 2004; White et al., 2005). Kupier, (2008) believes depending on memory is unreliable and unsafe. Students who use handheld technology can work safely and quickly in complex environments. PDAs offer some unique challenges to clinical, laboratory and classroom settings such as cost, faculty acceptance and identification of user friendly hardware and software (Huffstutler, Wyatt, & Wright, 2002).

**Strategy**  
Students used PDAs during their nursing education. Demonstrating the PDA was useful and easy to access information quickly to provide safe quality patient care without relying on their memory.

**Practice Change**  
Provide evidence that students who use PDAs access information quickly to promote safe quality patient care.

**Evaluation Design**  
A pre-test post-test design using mixed methods was used to measure students’ perception of PDA usefulness and ease of use during their nursing education.

**Results**  
A 20 question pre-test and post-test survey was distributed to 60 undergraduate nursing students enrolled in the spring 2009 semester. Preliminary data demonstrate that 75% of students find the PDA useful in the classroom and clinical setting while 65% of those surveyed find PDAs easy to use. (Final results are pending and available by conference date).

**Recommendations**  
PDAs are appropriate for undergraduate nursing students to find information quickly, promote confidence, and safe quality patient care.

**Lessons Learned**  
1. Collaboration and mentoring are needed to implement PDAs in nursing education.  
2. PDAs helped students become efficient in gathering information.  
3. PDAs allow access to information at all times.
Bibliography