Educating DNP Students about Critical Appraisal and Knowledge Translation
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Background: Consumers expect that health care providers utilize best evidence when making clinical decisions. Research indicates that nurses at all levels of educational preparation lack the knowledge and skills to critically appraise the evidence and, as a result, ineffectively implement evidence-based practice (EBP) in their clinical settings. Although Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) graduates are in a pivotal position to support, guide and utilize EBP, critical appraisal skills and EBP competencies have not been well integrated in DNP level nursing curricula. We have designed a DNP level EBP course to help students critically appraise and utilize best evidence in clinical practice.

Level of Educational Program: DNP

Targeted Learning Outcomes:
1. Incorporate advanced critical appraisal skills for Level 1 research evidence
2. Utilize the consensus process for reaching a conclusion about the scientific merit of a research article
3. Identify the steps involved in conducting a systematic review of the literature
4. Interpret the results of a meta-analysis
5. Evaluate the strength of evidence underlying clinical practice guidelines (CPGs)
6. Translate evidence-based knowledge from an individual, systems or organizational perspective for clinical practice

Teaching-Learning Activities:
1. Critical appraisal of randomized controlled trials using the CONSORT guidelines and the Cochrane Risk of Bias tables, systematic reviews and meta-analyses using the PRISMA checklist
2. Synchronous small group discussions of research article critiques with faculty leaders
3. Using the AGREE II instrument to appraise CPGs
4. Knowledge translation (KT) strategies for complex health care environments

Evaluation of Approach:
1. Student course evaluations
2. Pre and post-course assessment of the students’ attitudes toward, perceived support from their professional network, self-efficacy beliefs, knowledge and utilization of EBP

Designing courses to meet the needs of DNP students for advanced critical appraisal and KT skills can be a challenge because their clinical backgrounds and prior academic preparation can be diverse. A pre and post-course evaluation will help refine these courses to assist students in acquiring these essential skills.
Bibliography:


