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Nursing education transformation to meet tomorrow's health care needs

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With major changes proposed by health care reform the impact on the environment in which nurses and other health care disciplines practice will certainly be impacted and changed. There is an emerging focus on primary care, transitional care and accountability by healthcare organizations which will impact nursing education. The traditional nursing educational model in which clinical training is focused in the acute care setting may not prepare our students adequately for future practice arenas. The IOM's Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health (2011) clearly outlines changes that need to occur in nursing education if we hope to prepare nurses with the competencies and skills required to practice in the future health care system. Traditional clinical education delivered in a "silo" will not serve the profession well. An innovative clinical education model will be presented that diminishes fragmentation of the clinical education model and provides the student a focus on the transition of patients throughout various healthcare environments. The transitional care model implemented in this project spans three semesters in which students are exposed patient's care which shifts from one setting of care to another. This presentation will discuss this novel model that provides students with learning experiences in patient-centered environments spanning the care continuum. It will explore how inter-professional collaborations in health professions education and partnership building with healthcare providers can provide a rich educational experience for nursing students which has impacted patient care outcomes. These unique partnerships will become increasingly important to leverage the expertise and resources of both academic and practice settings required to address the complexity of patient care needs faced in our country.

Biography

Nan Smith-Blair has completed a BSN from Texas Christian University, MSN from Northwestern State University and a PhD from the University of Kansas. She currently holds a position of an Associate Professor in the Eleanor Mann School of Nursing at the University of Arkansas-Fayetteville where she is the Director of the nursing honors program. She is a Distinguished Fellow in the National Academies of Practice. She currently serves as the President of the Southern Nursing Research Society and serves on the Leadership Council for the Council for the Advancement of Nursing Science. Her research focus is transitional care in high risk patient populations.

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