ORIGINAL RESEARCH

A110 | **INVESTIGATING NURSING STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES IN SIMULATED PRACTICE LEARNING AND ACADEMIC STAFF'S ROLE AS PRACTICE SUPERVISORS: A CASE STUDY**

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Introduction: In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Nursing and Midwifery Council introduced an Emergency Standard for Nursing Education in 2021, allowing for simulated practice learning to replace up to 300 hours of clinical placement. Simulated practice learning is simulation-based education that adheres with NMC standards for practice learning and assessment.

The aim of this paper is to investigate the experiences of nursing students undertaking simulated practice learning and the experiences of academic staff in acting as a practice supervisor. This abstract represents the third phase of a four-phase research study funded by the Council of Deans of Health [1].

Methods: A case study approach combining quantitative and qualitative methods. Data collection occurred between February and March 2023 and consisted of a student nurse self-reporting survey and a focus group of academic staff. A convenience sample of student nurses was used from one University Campus. The participants included second year mental health nursing students (n=22) and child nursing students (n=26) from a sampling frame of 151 students. The first part of the student survey consisted of self-assessment of competence against NMC [2] Standards of Proficiency for Registered Nurses. The second part of the survey was a student evaluation of their experience of the simulated practice learning including supervision, assessment, skills development, support, engagement and satisfaction and transferability to other settings. A convenience sampling technique was also used to recruit mental health academic

staff (n=4) who acted as practice supervisors on the simulated practice learning experience.

Ethical Approval from the University Committee was granted.

Results: The majority of students reported that simulated practice learning was engaging, contributing to increased confidence and the development of valuable skills essential for their prospective roles as registered nurses. Notably, mental health student nurses outperformed their child nursing counterparts in attaining specified proficiencies in simulated practice learning. More than 86% of mental health students achieved six out of the nine targeted proficiencies, while for child nursing students, only two out of the ten targeted proficiencies were accomplished by over 80% of the cohort.

The academic focus group revealed 4 themes, responsibility of getting it right, addressing gaps in knowledge and experience and the challenges of being a practice supervisor.

Discussion: Simulated practice learning can contribute to the achievement of nursing proficiency but requires careful consideration for sustainability and resource management. The modality of simulated practice learning needs to align closely with proficiency targets. Academic staff must be adequately prepared for their educational role in designing and delivering SPL.

Ethics statement: Authors confirm that all relevant ethical standards for research conduct and dissemination have been met. The submitting author confirms that relevant ethical approval was granted, if applicable.

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