

Benchmark-Professional Capstone and Practicum Reflective Journal

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Some numerous changes and complexities are witnessed in nursing practices. These changes are as a result of technological advancements that seek to improve the quality of care. Therefore, one needs to be equipped to deal with the complexities and challenges that are witnessed in healthcare. The practicum experience has offered me with expertise on how to handle patients and equipped me with skills on leadership, new practice approaches, intra professional collaboration, health disparities, population health concerns, and economic models, health policy, ethical considerations in healthcare, and the role of technology in improving healthcare outcomes. These skills are essential for quality healthcare provision and professional growth.

#### **New Practice Approaches**

Driven by the need to improve patients' healthcare, there has been the adoption of evidence-based practices in healthcare. This has helped to deal with health problems such as chronic diseases like diabetes, heart attacks, hypertension, among others. Moreover, I was able to learn new approaches that boost patient care, such as hourly rounds, writing of bedside shift reports, reorganization, and white communication boards (Zaccagnini & Pechacek, 2019). Hourly rounds help to reduce patients' stress and anxiety, and this is because they see the nurses more often. Bedside reports have been essential in ensuring that patients can participate in conversations with the nurses and can ask questions. The use of evidence-based practices has also helped to revolutionize healthcare in various ways. The higher institutions of learning can change their programs to accommodate evidence based practices.

### **Intra- Professional Collaborations**

Teamwork and collaboration are essential elements in the attainment of organizational goals and objectives. Besides, the tasks in healthcare are more complex to be accomplished by one professional. Some of the issues require the contribution of individuals from all specialties. In the promotion of evidence-based practice, all stakeholders need to be engaged in decision making and policy formulation (Lamont, Brunero, Lyons, Foster, & Perry, 2015). This enhances the ownership and sustainability of the evidence-based practice. Besides, I have learned that intra professionals' collaborations are crucial in solving problems, widening the demand for care, and effective utilization of limited resources in the organization.

A nurse also has not only have to work with others to provide services but also to support more comprehensive activities and procedures. Through intra professional collaboration, there is the enactment of ethical standards of care irrespective of the costs and composition of the team. Also, I learned that through intra professional collaboration, there is the sharing of ideas, and this promotes the continuous learning process in the clinical setting.

### **Healthcare Delivery and Clinical Systems**

The clinical systems guide quality healthcare delivery in an organization. A health care system refers to the institutions, people, and the resources that are used to deliver healthcare services that meet the needs of the target population. A clinical system enhances the provision of efficient and effective healthcare delivery. The complexities experienced in the clinical setting are solved through appropriate systems. During the practicum, I was able to learn and interact with various clinical systems such as electronic health records, automated dispensing systems, and clinical health systems. The clinical health information system is useful in storing, availing,

and manipulating clinical information that is vital in healthcare delivery processes(Sittig & Singh,2015).

Electronic medical records enhance healthcare delivery through storage and easy retrieval of patient's information. The information is made available to the patients and service providers to prescribe medication to patients. Experiencing an automated dispensing system, which was my change proposal, was so satisfying. It helped to eliminate prescribing errors that occur during the hospital. Therefore, having research on the automated dispensing system, the practicum offered me the opportunity to evaluate its viability and applicability. However, there is a need to conduct refresher training to nurses on the clinical healthcare systems.

Exploring healthcare delivery through the implementation of clinical health systems, it is related to the course competencies. This is because more research can be conducted to evaluate the relationships between the clinical operations and the provision of quality health services to patients. Moreover, they enhance patient safety by minimizing the occurrence of medical errors(Sittig & Singh,2015). The healthcare delivery systems have emphasized on course competency of managing patient's healthcare in the changing environment.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Nurses in the clinical setting are expected to conduct themselves within ethical frameworks. A nurse is supposed to respect all individuals in the healthcare setting and uphold dignity in dealing with communication and care (Solum, Maluwa, Tveit & Severinsson,2016). They should be able to understand the proper intra professional relationship that they are supposed

**to maintain with the patients and the family. During the practicum, I became aware**  
**that ethical dilemmas are common in the clinical setting. In such circumstances, a**

**nurse is expected to make decisions that promote the best interest of the patient. Therefore, as a nurse, it is essential to understand the climate and culture of the organization. There is a code of ethics that guides the interaction among the staff.**

**Understanding these ethical codes enable individuals to work comfortably and in harmony with others. Ethical practices also can be promoted through consultation with ethical experts. I learned that ethical behavior in the organization starts with each individual, to be treated with respect and dignity; one is expected to treat others with respect and dignity. Therefore, as a practicing nurse, I will always strive to act based on the best interest of the patient and within organizational ethical frameworks.**

### **Population Health Concerns**

**There are numerous health concerns that a nurse is required to address; they range from simple to chronic concerns. Some of the most prominent health concerns encountered during the pandemic included infectious respiratory infections, prescription drug overdose, tobacco use, heart disease and stroke, arthritis, physical activity, and obesity (Fawcett & Ellenbecker, 2015). These concerns affect all populations from the young to the elderly. The care responsibility of a**

nurse is to address these health concerns. It is the duty and responsibility of every nurse to offer individualized care to the target population. They address this through early identification and timely treatment for those who are affected by these conditions.

During the pandemic, I discovered that addressing health concerns require collaborative efforts. Some of the concerns require inter professional collaboration that all the departments need to work together; there are evidence based practices that are I emphasize in attending to the patients. Nurses need to work with others to address the needs of the varied population in the clinical setting. To attend to patients, the clinical officers are required to be more attentive, since some of the health concerns are as a result of more continuous activities (Fawcett & Ellenbecker, 2015). Therefore, to address these concerns, nurses need to increase their competency levels and be more attentive while attending to the patients. Nurses need to promote evidence based practices in dealing with these health concerns.

Dealing with chronic conditions has enabled me to apply knowledge gained throughout the course to offer individualized care. Besides, through promoting evidence practices, I was able to able to meet autonomy and social justice for the diverse population in the clinical setting. The

growth of the nursing profession requires continuous research on evidence-based practices to handle various population concerns.

### **The Role of Technology in Improving Healthcare Outcomes**

Technology is an integral part of nursing practice. There are diverse technological advancements that can be applied with technical progress. Technology helps to increase efficiency, improve quality of care, and reduce costs. Therefore, as a nurse practitioner, technology is a necessity for better healthcare outcomes. Technology helps to improve health care outcomes through facilitating effective communication between professionals, improving medical safety, reduction of potential medical errors, encouraging patient centered care, and increasing access to medical information (Dykes, Rozenblum, Dalal, Massaro, Chang, Clements & Hanna, 2017). Having information technology enabled us to utilize technological systems to improve health outcomes.

Electronic medical records that are adopted in the organization promote safety, communication, and easy access to medical information (Dykes et al., 2017). Despite the accomplishments in healthcare, there is a technological gap among the staff in the organization. The usage of technological systems is a challenge among some of the team. Therefore, there is a

and for training on how to use the systems and technical support to the staff. Moreover, the systems that are implemented in the organization need to be user-friendly.

Thus I was able to use the technology and information systems to communicate with the patients. The systems enable collaboration with other staff within and outside the clinical setting. The safety of patients' records was assured since only a few authorized individuals had access to the database. Therefore, the experience gained aligns with nursing informatics course competencies.

### Health Policy

Health policy is the actions and decisions that are taken to achieve set healthcare goals in society. Health policy helps to inform and build consensus among people. Besides, they also help to outline priorities and the roles of different individuals in the organization (Feo & Kitson, 2016). Some of the health policies in the organization include administrative and human resources policies, employee health and safety policies, patient care policies, among others. Any profession needs to have a sense of direction, and our policies outline this. Policies affect all stakeholders in the organization; therefore, they require to be involved in making them. The policy-making process needs to be interactive, and every stakeholder should clearly articulate



their views. I learned that health policies are also the legal frameworks that stipulate the interaction of management, employees and patients. Understanding of the structures for policymaking ensures that one can effectively participate in the formulation. These are the competencies that I acquired during the course work.

Effective communication skills are essential to undertake exercises that require the attention of the stakeholders (Fee & Kitson, 2016). The weakness that exists is that most of the staff are not aware of the policies in place; therefore, there is a need for enlightenment on the policies and the making process. The course seeks to ensure that the stakeholders understand the strategies that are available and utilize them to promote better health outcomes. Therefore participating actively and policy making aligns with the course competencies. Also, the nursing profession should enact health policies that encourage quality healthcare outcomes.

### **Leadership and Theoretical Models**

Strong leadership is essential in the work environment, especially in the area that has a lot of pressure and requires quick decision making. Quality leadership helps to achieve successful working teams, encourage the attainment of organization goals and objectives, promote positive growth, proper organization, and economic growth of the organization (Crowne, Young,

**Goldman, Patterson, Krouse & Proenca, 2017). During the pandemic, I was able to witness critical conditions that required the leader to make prompt decisions. The leader was also able to solve conflicts that happened due to misunderstandings and demanding work relations. The department leader trusted subordinates/ leadership through delegating duties to them. Through this opportunity, I was able to learn the importance of effective communication, the delegation of responsibilities, and offering support to others.**

**Health economic models are frameworks that are used to estimate the effects of an intervention and the consequences of the costs that are used. Budget impact model and cost-effectiveness models are commonly used in health care (Chhatwal, Kanwal, Roberts & Dunn, 2015). The budget impact model helps to estimate the impacts of the intervention on healthcare costs, offset drug costs and the adverse effect event costs. Managed care payers commonly use this model. Cost-effectiveness models help to assess the value clinical and economic value based on the implemented intervention.**

**The leadership has the role of ensuring that they adopt the most appropriate health economic models. This helps to evaluate the viability of the intervention and impact on healthcare outcomes. Leadership and economic models are related to the course since they help to**

complex and using theories and concepts. More research can be conducted to assess the validity of these models in the clinical setting. Moreover, ensuring professional nursing leadership and management in the provision of quality care and patients safety.

### **Health Disparities**

Equity in healthcare is a significant challenge; this is because healthcare services are not available to all patients' population. Racial discrimination, unequal distribution of resources, literacy, poverty levels, and lack of enough healthcare providers are the leading cause of health care disparities. There are high health disparities between the whites and blacks in the USA, due to poverty and education levels (O'Keefe, Meltzer & Bethca, 2015). Besides, there are health disparities between urban and rural areas. Most of the health facilities are located in urban areas, which makes access to health care a challenge, especially among the elderly.

These healthcare disparities can be solved through ensuring there is equal distribution of resources and enough nurses to offer home based care to the elderly. Nurses have a role in investigating inequalities through the education process, and it involves the gathering of information on the characteristics of the population. This case is related to the course in that some of the situations can be viewed as an explanation for professional and ethnic disparities.

**Reliable evidence can be used to evaluate the relationship between the level of income and health status.**

### **Conclusion**

**Education offers a student the opportunity to experience and describe the concepts that they are learned. I have able to learn key ideas and apply knowledge in promoting quality healthcare outcomes. New approaches help to introduce evidence based practices that promote quality care and safety of the patient. Inter professional collaboration helps in sharing of ideas that can help to better health care. Healthcare delivery systems are the core of nursing practice. The systems help to offer services more efficiently and effectively. The clinical information systems, such as electronic medical records, secure email, communication, and easy retrieval of information. This explains the value technology plays in improving healthcare outcomes. Strong leadership, economic models, and health policies are crucial in the provision of quality care. Advocacy and training will help to eliminate health disparities and ensure that nurses adhere to ethical considerations when attending to patients.**

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