Introduction

The purpose of this presentation is to describe an innovative way to aid in the success of nursing students. The YES workshop was created to help students to succeed in their goal to become a practical nurse and to help alleviate the student attrition problem. The objective for this project is to provide orientation and preparation to incoming students, with the intention of encouraging active participation and responsibility for learning. As the need for practical nurses increases in today’s healthcare arena (NLN, 2014), the need for successful completion of nursing programs is paramount. This project is implemented with the goal to help guide the student to effective learning, graduation, passing the state licensure exam, and being a safe, well-prepared nurse.

Methods

A workshop was developed to encourage students to take responsibility for their learning and to introduce the concepts of an active learning environment with discussion, group work, and hands-on use of technology. Adult Education Theory as well as active teaching and learning environment are necessary elements in the delivery of information in this workshop. With the implementation of the workshop, collaborative group exercises in medical terminology, medical math, and a mock lesson are explored. An emphasis is placed on active participation with the use of i-clickers in the classroom as well as gaming and online resources. The goal of the YES! workshop is to provide the students with the expectations of the program, to identify learning styles, study habits, and the need to be actively involved.

Although highly encouraged, all attendance up to this point has been on a voluntary basis. To increase the reliability of the data, mandatory attendance to the workshop for the entire incoming class would be necessary.

Results

At the end of the workshop, a written evaluation is given to the students to fill out as well as a group discussion period identifying their accomplishment of the outcomes. The outcomes were measured by a score for the written quiz, an identifiable learning style on the questionnaire, a graph for the i-clicker questions, and the students’ written and verbal acknowledgment of achievement.

The students in attendance all had high praise of the content introduced and felt that it was a very beneficial and rewarding experience. Written statements included descriptions of reduced anxiety, and a sense of newfound confidence.

The research is ongoing to determine if the prep course will indeed increase the percent of students that will complete the program and graduate. Evidence thus far indicates that there is potential for this workshop to increase success and decrease attrition in the 12 month practical nursing program.

Discussion

The issue of student attrition prompted the implementation of the YES! workshop and the need to promote successful program completion of a practical nursing program. The rigorous of an intensive twelve-month long diploma program in practical nursing can seem overwhelming for a certain percentage of those who register. Nursing education strategies should incorporate early and frequent exposure to medication calculations in an effort to decrease errors that cause an adverse patient outcome (Zahara-Such, 2013). The nomenclature used in the healthcare environment is often difficult for the student to grasp. Introduction to some basic medical terms, with an assessment of what they currently know, was intended to help the student gain an understanding of what to expect and a foundation to build upon. This early preparation and orientation to the expectations of the program encourage active participation and promote successful learning.

References


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