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Self Reflection

NUR 4010

Viktoriya Gorelik

Community nursing is one of the most important roles and services nursing can provide. A community nurse working with a wide range of people on prevention, maintenance, promotion of health and trying to educate the population according to evidence based practices, has the mentality that preventing a disease is better than treating one. During my clinical classes my goal was to meet 9 clinical objectives in order to learn community assessment from a community nurse’s point of view, improve communication skills, professional attitude and make a new goals for my professional growth..

For my Service Learning Project, I worked with the clients at Stein Senior Center in Lower Manhattan. The goal of the project was a community assessment in terms of safety, affordable living, social life, health care assessment and promotion of well-being for elderly members of the community. My work with the clients involved various responsibilities such as blood pressure screenings, teaching exercise classes, and serving lunch. Together with my classmates, I participated in several educational projects: nutrition teaching, stretching exercises as well as safety in hot weather, home fire and fall prevention lectures . These activities were educational and beneficial to me in achieving practical experience and confidence as a healthcare professional.

**Objective 1: Demonstration of individual professionalism through personal behavior and appearance.**

A nurse is expected to show individual professionalism through personal behavior and appearance. I was able to demonstrate this quality through my activities at Stein Senior Center, by adhering to high standards in terms of punctuality and self-presentation. Another aspect of professionalism is the self-initiative to educate oneself. I showed this initiative by actively engaging in research related to nutrition and home safety.

**Objective 2: Employ analytical reasoning and critical thinking skills when providing care to individuals and families in the community settings.**

Another expectation for a professional nurse is to use analytical reasoning and critical thinking skills in providing care. I was able to do this by adjusting the content of the educational projects to the clients' environment. For example, fall prevention is an even higher priority for clients living in urban areas who may be required to walk up and down stairs on a regular basis. Hot weather is a serious issue for clients who live in older buildings with poor air conditioning. Through the use of my reasoning skills, I was able to share practical advice for these environments that could potentially save lives.

**Objective 3:** **Effectively communicate with divertive groups and disciplines using a variety of strategies regarding the health needs of individuals and families in the community setting.**

A nurse must be able to effectively communicate both with clients and other healthcare professionals, using a variety of strategies, and according to the developmental needs of the clients. My learning projects required constant communication between myself and my teammates, as well as the course instructor and seniors. Being in a new environment such as the senior center, gave me the chance to reflect on my own communication skills and improve in areas of clarity and detail. Also when conducting classes with the clients, I was able to practice the habit of monitoring their reactions to make sure I was coming across clearly.

**Objective 4: Establish environments conducive to learning and use plans for learners based on evidence-based practice.**

I was able to research areas of physical exercises, nutrition, mental health and home safety according to the unique needs of my clients. After deciding to focus on certain topics, I had the opportunity to research relevant academic articles and narrow down the information in a way that would be helpful and accessible to the clients. During our educational projects were implemented pre and post tests to assess effectiveness of our teaching. I was also able to receive feedback on the classes from the clients themselves, with the goal of improving my teaching and communication skills.

**Objective 5:** **Utilize informational technology when managing individuals and families.**

Informatics technology was a part of my learning process at the senior center, and I had the chance to demonstrate professionalism regarding confidentiality with client records for blood pressure readings or when they shared personal problems with me.

**Objective 6:** **Demonstration a commitment to professional development**.

A nurse is expected to show commitment to professional development, by assuming responsibility for their own lifelong learning. While preparing safety lessons for the clients, I came across recent literature. During a walking tour, I explored the community in terms of if learning centers or health classes near the Stein Center area are present. During our educational lectures, I was able to make a professional contact with a pharmacist who gave a speech about medications safety. All of that added to my knowledge and understanding of a professional community assessment. Therefore the research was not only beneficial to the clients, but also to myself as a professional nurse.

**Objective 7. Incorporate professional nursing standards and accountability into practice.**

Professional nursing standards and accountability must always be a part of professional practice. I was aware and compliant with the center's rules and policy. During my clinical work, I was cognizant of my responsibility to help others and to ensure their safety and well-being. I made sure that I read over the center’s policies that were displayed in the lunch room and that I was aware how to respond in emergency situations. For example, we encountered a situation where one of the seniors had high blood pressure and I followed the center’s policy and reported the abnormal readings to my professor and she took the necessary actions to solve the situation. I showed commitment to the organization and its clients by ordering my life so that I could arrive every day to clinical in my optimal state, both physically and mentally.

**Objective 8. Collaborate with clients, significant support persons and members of the health care team.**

Teamwork is a major component of healthcare and a nurse is required to constantly collaborate both with clients and members of the healthcare team. I was able to do this through constant communication regarding clients' needs, and managing and planning client activities. I was also able to refer several of the clients to the learning health center on 1st Ave, which could help further their health, well-being, and knowledge.

**Objective 9. Recognize the impact of economic, political, social and demographic forces that affect the delivery of health care services.**

Finally, a nurse must recognize the impact of economic, political, social and demographic forces that affect the delivery of healthcare services. I was able to receive such data by communicating with the seniors. I realized that not all the clients have optimal access to healthcare services. Additionally, I realized that for some clients, their meal at the senior center was their only meal of the day, due to financial constraints. The senior center is located in a rich area, therefore the rent is high and there are no affordable places to buy food. This forces many of the seniors to go to places such as McDonalds where they could afford to buy food, thus consuming unhealthy foods that eventually lead to health problems. Also, the seniors are socially isolated because most recreational areas and activities are expensive and not affordable for the seniors, thus making going to the park their only choice.

In conclusion, this course taught me to be more attentive to people around me and my community. I learned to pay attention to details that I would have disregarded before and I came upon extremely useful resources such as some websites which I will refer to constantly from now. In general, I believe that this course molded me into a better professional and gave me invaluable experience.