Evaluation of post-graduate online education program for Nurse Practitioners

CELCIA LITTLE, MSN, CPNP, SHARON DUDLEY-BROWN, PHD, FNP-BC, LINDSAY WILSON, MSN, CPNP, MARIA OLIVA-HEMKER, MD

JOHNS HOPKINS HOSPITAL, JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY, SCHOOL OF NURSING, JOHNS HOPKINS SCHOOL OF MEDICINE; BALTIMORE, MD,

Introduction

The Advance Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) consensus model notes that preparation for specialty practice in the formal NP program is not mandatory, therefore the educational foundation needs for specialty providers may not be met (NCSBN, 2008). To bridge the gap in education and promote safe and quality care, post-graduate education programs are recommended by the Institute of Medicine (Hart, 2006).

Objectives

• Assess the utility of a post-graduate online education program for Nurse Practitioners (NP) through a needs assessment survey, followed by development and implementation of a pediatric gastroenterology focused post-graduate online education program.

Methods

- Design:
  - Two-part study education approved by Johns Hopkins IRB
  - 15 question needs assessment survey
  - Education intervention
  - 5 learning modules
  - 10 question pre-test, post-test

- Setting:
  - Needs assessment survey-NAPNAP, APGNN, Qualtrics
  - Education intervention

- Inclusion criteria:
  - Nurse Practitioners certified or employed in pediatrics of any background, age, gender, ethnicity, employment experience, and specialty organization membership

- Exclusion criteria:
  - Non-NP professionals and those not certified, employed or interested in pediatrics

Interventions

• Develop and disseminate a needs assessment survey to determine the need for post-graduate education programs.
• Develop a five-module, online pediatric gastroenterology education program using education materials from experts in the field and clinical practice guidelines.
• Develop a 10-question pre/post-test to assess knowledge along with an evaluation of the online education program to aid in development of future programs.

Outcomes

• Demonstrate a need for a post-graduate education program
• Note a statistically significant difference (increase) in post vs pre-knowledge scores.

Measures

• A 40% participant approval rating of an online education program noted on needs assessment survey.
• Comparing the mean post-test scores to the mean pre-test scores.

Statistical Analysis

- G-power Analysis for pooled effect size
- Paired t-test to assess mean difference in pre/post test scores

Results

- 40% of participants chose online education programs as their preferred format for post-graduate education.
- Higher mean score post-education program implementation (pre-test mean 6.15, SD=1.16; post-test mean 8.45, SD =0.75).
- There is an overall need for additional national qualitative and quantitative post-graduate program data to determine the direct impact of these programs on perception of preparation, practice competence and patient outcomes.

Conclusions

• All NPs transitioning into specialty practice should feel adequately prepared and at least half of preparation should occur by other NPs.
• Adaptation of post-graduate education models employed by our physician and physician assistant counterparts should be considered to keep up with the demands of health care and limit job performance issues.
• Implementation of similar programs may insure that competent practitioners receive the education needed to provide safe patient care.
• Results of this project established a need for post-graduate education programs and identified them as beneficial across specialties.
• There is an overall need for additional national qualitative and quantitative post-graduate program data to determine the direct impact of these programs on perception of preparation, practice competence and patient outcomes.