

Facilitating Transition to Practice for Acute Care Nurse Practitioners

Through a Cadaver Workshop: Final Scholarly Paper

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On my honor I pledge that I have neither given nor received any unauthorized assistance on this paper. April 18th, 2021, Caroline T. Banes

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### **Abstract**

**Background and Purpose:** Acute care nurse practitioners (NPs) receive rigorous education and training, however, due to specialty environments, patient complexities and volume, additional training should be considered to assist transition to practice. In effort to more quickly incorporate knowledge and expected procedural skills into practice, given the high demand for acute care NPs and the reality of a limited orientation period, post graduate training is needed in specialty settings. The purpose of the quality improvement (QI) project was to facilitate transition to practice through a cadaver workshop that provided acute care NPs an opportunity to exercise clinical based decision making, evolve surgical anatomical knowledge, and apply procedural competencies in a safe, non-acute environment.

**Methods:** The project design was mixed methods which included a pre-test post-test design and two validated descriptive surveys. The project sought to improve surgical anatomical knowledge and competency in common procedures, evaluate the workshop, and improve reported satisfaction and self-confidence.

**Results:** A total of 9 participants were enrolled in the cadaver workshop. There was a statistically significant improvement on pre-test versus the post-test. Participants agreed or strongly agreed that all elements of the workshop design were beneficial and had a high level of satisfaction with the workshop. The participants were more confident in their clinical practice following the cadaver workshop experience.

**Conclusion:** The project results add to the body of evidence that knowledge in specialty areas such as trauma and surgical acute and critical care is beneficial to new acute care NPs upon transition to practice. Skills experience in a cadaver lab may contribute to increased knowledge,

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confidence, efficient diagnosis, and timely procedural performance in the clinical setting in contrast with traditional approaches.

Implications: Additional investigation is needed to assess and measure benefits, clinical outcomes, and detailed procedural competency such as chest tube insertion following the implementation of additional anatomical and procedural training for NPs in trauma and surgical care.

Keywords: cadaver, nurse practitioner, procedural competency, surgical anatomy, specialty care