Effects of a Lactation Telesimulation on Labor and Delivery and Postpartum Nurse Self-Efficacy

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Background

- Healthcare professionals on L&D and postpartum units have often not been given the proper training to provide lactation support, resulting in decreased breastfeeding rates.
- There is good quality evidence to support that training healthcare staff in lactation support significantly increases their knowledge, skills, and confidence, as well as breastfeeding exclusivity and duration.
- Multiple studies have demonstrated the benefits of telesimulation, including improved clinical skills and increased self-efficacy and perceived preparedness

Purpose

The purpose of this quality improvement project was to implement a lactation telesimulation to further train the nurses on the L&D and postpartum units

Aims

Aim 1: Increase nurse utilization of knowledge in practice
Aim 2: Identify learning satisfaction with the telesimulation
Aim 3: Increase the unit's exclusive breastfeeding rates at patient discharge
Aim 4: Increase nurse self-efficacy in providing lactation support

Methods

Design: Pre-/post-intervention study design
Sample/Setting: 10 nurses working on the L&D and postpartum units at a large urban teaching hospital in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States.
Intervention Procedures: Evidence-based telesimulation with a high-fidelity lactation simulation model (LSM) created by LiquidGoldConcept, Inc. (LGC). Project participants scheduled individual times to meet with a standardized patient wearing the LSM for a 20-minute telesimulation via Google Meet. Utilization of knowledge in practice, learning satisfaction, and self-efficacy were measured by Qualtrics surveys pre-, post-, and 30-days post intervention, as well as by phone interview 30 days post-intervention. Exclusive breastfeeding rates were collected by the unit's lead IBCLC.

Learning Satisfaction

Items with the highest median learning satisfaction scores:
- Allowed participant to test their clinical ability
- Was a valuable learning experience

Items with only "agree" and "strongly agree" responses:
- Allowed participant to reflect on their clinical ability
- Revealed participant's clinical weaknesses
- Was a valuable learning experience

Phone Interview Highlights

Question	Response
Examples of using hand expression and/or breast massage techniques at work since the telesim?	- Assisting C-section patient with hand expression onto a spoon - Using hand expression to get the baby more interested in latching - Empowering a mother to breastfeed even if the baby won't latch
Did the telesim help you identify areas of improvement?	- Yes, I did not know about breast massage and engorgement relief techniques - Yes, I realized how much evidence-based information is available to me and have been reading more about lactation support since the telesim
Do you feel more or less confident in your ability to teach hand expression and/or breast massage after the telesim? Why?	- I feel more confident in my ability to teach breast massage because I hadn't done it before. Practicing with a real person helped. - I feel more confident in teaching the techniques because I have a better idea of what the massage techniques steps are. - I feel more confident now. Hearing patient feedback was really helpful. - I feel much more confident now, especially in teaching about expectations of milk letdown. Before, I felt like I was repeating someone else's narrative. Now I feel like I genuinely know the information.

Implications for Practice

- This QI project was the first to utilize the LiquidGoldConcept, Inc. (LGC) lactation simulation model with inpatient nurses as the sample population.
- The process of implementing this intervention was useful for LGC to continue tailoring their telesimulation to inpatient nurses' needs.
- This project sets an example for nurse educators on other L&D and postpartum units to utilize lactation telesimulation as an evidence-based, cost-saving training method in the future.