

Abstract

Special Article

A Critical Review of Preceptor Development for Nurses Working with Undergraduate Nursing Students

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Abstract

Background: Preceptorship is a clinical teaching model through which undergraduate nursing students are facilitated to acquire beginning competencies that enable them to function effectively in the complex workplace environment upon graduation. Central to this model are preceptors who, although they may be expert clinicians, require specific educational support in order to carry out their student supervision role effectively.

Objectives: The aim of this study was to explore the outcomes of preceptor development activities for preceptors of undergraduate nursing students.

Methods: A comprehensive literature search was undertaken. Thirty-five studies of qualitative, quantitative and mixed method design were retrieved for analysis. Findings were analysed using a modified version of Kirkpatrick's model for educational interventions.

Results: Following development interventions, changes in knowledge, skills and attitudes in precepting were the most commonly reported outcomes.

Conclusion: Preceptor development programs appear to have positive impact. Implications for education and practice include the need for better preceptor support, especially with regard to workload management, to enable preceptors apply acquired knowledge and skills acquired in order to benefit undergraduate nursing students. More robust research is needed to build an evidence base in support of developing preceptors.

Key words: Preceptor, Preceptee, Preceptor Development, Faculty