Introduction

In 2004 a request was made to the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) from the Nurse Directors’ Association and the Council of Deans asking that simulation of practice be used as a legitimate part of practice learning hours. This was supported in 2005 by Nurse Focus Groups who were considering issues raised around the fitness for practice of pre registration nurse at the point of registration. Later in 2005, a Task and Finish group developed standards to support simulation of practice assessment and in Feb 2006 the Simulation In Practice Project Group was established. A bid submitted to the NMC by the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting (SON & M) at the University of Southampton, in conjunction with the practice partners, was accepted in May of this year. Eleven other projects have also been agreed across the country, all of which are to report back to the NMC regarding outcomes.

Project Outline

The aims of the countrywide projects are

- Standards should be developed for the use of simulation for up to 10% of programme hours.
- The standards to be piloted across a number of programme providers.
- The Council of Deans and other stakeholders would be involved with the NMC in developing and piloting the standards

Within Hampshire and the IOW

A steering group has been established between service providers and the SON & M to undertake the initial pilot bid and is now in the process of further developing the project. The steering group will evaluate and report on the project outcomes. Partnership working has been key to the development to date of this project.

The service contribution to the project can be seen in a variety of ways:

- Representation on the steering group – Rosemary Chable
- The use of experts from practice to support the development of practice based scenarios.
- The use of practice mentors in the simulation assessment process.

This project is important from a practice perspective as we continue to look at the quality of assessment of students to ensure fitness for practice and purpose on pre registration programmes.

Project Design

The project design comprises of a number of components and relates to a scenario of a patient/client. The adult branch is based on a patient 3 days post acute myocardial infarction and consists of
• Half a day exploring the online recourse relating to the assessment of patients
• Online questionnaire to test student understanding of patients current care needs
• Facilitated session to discuss care planning for the patient
• 1 ½ hour simulated practice session (for this the current assessment of practice document will be used to assess the student although it is anticipated that at the most students will be able to achieve 2 or 3 competencies)

The child branch follows a similar outline and relates to a child who is admitted via the Emergency Department and undergoes an appendicectomy. There is also a scenario based around the mental health needs of a female client.

Supporting the project – next stages

Assessment of student nurses in the simulation setting is the next stage of the project with details of how this will be managed being considered at this time. Mentors from practice will be used to support this process.

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