Education of Specialist Nurses – Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow

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Structure of the presentation

- Why this topic is important today
- Purpose of education of specialist nurses
- Reflect on our past - historical background
- Focus on current practices – example from one university
- Propose future direction of specialist nurse education
Why this topic?
Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

- Past informs the decisions we make today for our future generations to come
- Basis for planning the future of advanced nurse practitioners
Purpose of education of specialist nurses

- Education of nurse specialists is a strategy to improve health care delivery
- Meet international standards criteria for recognition
Historical Background of Education of Specialist Nurses

- Post basic nursing diplomas – 1950’s
- Medical science and technology developments
- Contributed to some medical advances (du Preez, 1988)
- Diploma in Operation Theatre Nursing – 1st heart transplant & ICU in GSH
Historical Background of Education of Specialist

- Regulation of specialist nursing education - 1980’s (SANC Reg. 212):
  - Limited number of specialist courses – “Legacy qualification”
  - Not responsive to new population health needs
  - Broad course objectives
  - No competency framework – no scope of practice
  - No alignment with ICN criteria and other international standards

- Colleges and universities
Current Practice in Education of Specialist Nurses

- An example of one university
- Highlight the role of different role players
- Possible solutions to challenges
  - Shortage of clinical specialist nurse educators
  - Shortage of funding
- Show that we can achieve specialist nurse education despite all challenges
Education of Specialist Nurses at UCT

- Nurses and midwives are prepared as specialist and advanced practitioners
- Curriculum is research-informed
- Use multidisciplinary and collaborative approaches to education
- Public-Private Partnership Model
- Our graduates are specialists who are a link between primary care level and other levels of care
Different role players

Medical Specialists

Clinical Nurse Specialists

Private and public

Curriculum Development Specialist & HOD

Custodian of the curriculum, professional standards, quality of the programmes

Nursing Directorate

Regulators

Partners & Funders

Fresenius Medical Care
Child Nursing Practice Development Unit in RXH
What informs our curriculum for specialist nurses

- Population health needs & challenges
- Millennium Development Goals
- Health service re-engineering
- Human Resource plan for health
- The National Strategic Plan
- South African Nursing Council - R212 and the position paper on specialist and advanced nursing
- National Health & Higher Education Legislation
- Partners’ and collaborations’ human resource needs
- ICN competency framework
Systems Theory

INPUT

PROCESS

OUTPUT

FEEDBACK
Alignment with HEQF (2008)

R212 objectives
- Exit level outcomes
- Core Competencies
- Fundamental competencies

Assessment
- Associated assessment criteria
- Innovative assessment methods
- Application of knowledge

Level
- Postgraduate diploma
- R425 & RPL
- Allowing for credit transfer within same programme
Proposal for future

• Clinical Masters aligned to Professional Masters degree
• First cohort - 2016
• Advanced nurse practitioners in response to health care needs of our populations
• Entry requirement specialist nursing diploma
• Focus in clinical leadership, mentoring and research
Proposal for future

• Preparation and increase of specialist specific nurse educators for educating advanced nurse practitioners
• Creation of posts for advanced nurse practitioners
References

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• Du Preez, L.J. 1988. The clinical nurse specialist in SA: an administrative perspective
• SANC website