

Title:

Benefits and Challenges of MS Leadership/Administration Students in Practicums Where Employed

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Session Title:

Developing Master-Level Programs

Slot:

J 10: Tuesday, 31 October 2017: 8:00 AM-8:45 AM

Scheduled Time:

8:00 AM

Keywords:

Master's practicum, administration and leadership

References:

Androwich, I.M. . . . Vlasses, F.R. (2012). Graduate practicums in nursing administration programs. *Journal of Nursing Administration*, 42(10), 454-457.

American Organization of Nurse Executives. (2010). *AONE Position Statement on the Educational Preparation of Nurse Leaders*. Washington, DC. Retrieved from <http://www.aone.org/resources/educational-preparation-nurse-leaders.pdf>

Council on Graduate Education for Administration in Nursing (CGEAN). (2012). *CGEAN Position Statement on the Educational Preparation of Nurse Executive and Nurse Managers*. Colorado Springs, CO. Retrieved from http://www.cgean.org/assets/docs/cgean_positon_on_educational_preparation.pdf

Hahn, J.A. (2010). Practicum projects of value: A successful strategic partnership between nurse executives and Master's level academia. *Nursing Economics*, 28(3), 143-148, 158.

Abstract Summary:

The purpose of this presentation is to describe the experiences of Nursing Leadership/Administration graduate students who choose to do their clinical practicums in their places of employment. Benefits and challenges will be described. Also included are evaluative statements that students and their preceptors make about this type of practicum setting.

Learning Activity:

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE
1. Identify benefits and challenges of using a student's employment setting for completion of the nursing leadership/administration practicum.	1. Overview of nursing leadership practicums from the literature. 2. Benefits of using a student's employment setting for completion of the leadership/administration practicum. 3. Challenges of using a student's employment setting for completion of the leadership/administration practicum.

2. Describe examples of practicum projects that are mutually beneficial to the MS Leadership/Administration student and the organization in which they are employed.	4. General examples include financial projects, projects related to performance improvement, quality, patient safety or contributions to formulating policies or enhancing a Magnet application. 5. Specific examples of practicum projects completed or in development.
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Abstract Text:

With a resurgence in graduate nursing administration programs, there is a dearth of literature relating to the practicum experience. In keeping with the American Organization of Nurse Executives' (AONE) Position Statement on the Educational Preparation of Nurse Executives and Nurse Managers (2010), nurses at these levels should be minimally prepared at the Master's level. The MS Nursing Administration/Leadership practicum experience within one's work environment can help advance the educational goals of the organization in alignment with their mission and goals. However, the Council of Graduate Education in Administrative Nursing (CGEAN)'s survey conducted in 2011 found that most MS Nursing Leadership/Administration programs use practicum sites outside the student's work organization. Androwich and colleagues (2011) suggest practicum course deliverables but make no recommendations as to the location of the clinical practicum. Sample practicum projects are offered by Hahn (2010) but all are completed outside of the student's work environment. In general, MS Nursing Leadership students are required to conduct a project in alignment with course and program outcomes that also offer significant value to the organization.

The purpose of this presentation is to describe the experiences of Nursing Leadership/Administration graduate students who choose to do their clinical practicums in their places of employment. Ruling out any conflict of interest at the outset, there are benefits to both the students and the employers that enhance leadership, scholarship, education, and clinical practice in ways that may influence organizational policy and culture. Working alongside colleagues, there is the opportunity to transform the knowledge gained through clinical projects to influence patient care and outcomes as common stakeholders in the employment setting. The mentoring partnerships, enhanced through collaboration, may lead to inter-professional changes at the bedside, as well as in the academic setting where faculty are involved. Organizations involved in the Magnet journey have nurse leaders who are seeking projects that mutually benefit individuals and setting outcomes, thus providing a fertile ground for MS nursing students. On the practical side, the MS students can be more efficient with improved efficacy in their work, travel, and personal lives that potentially merge under a single roof. There are also challenges that surface in this model of practicum which include the appropriate separation of work and school time to assure that each endeavor receives the student's full attention at the right time, the assurance through the honor code, and activity/time documentation software attesting that hours at the employment setting are being attributed correctly, and a limitation of learning "other ways" of doing things that come with education in a setting different from the employment setting. Challenges that impede students in their non-work environment include access to the electronic medical record and other proprietary data, along with knowing who are the best personnel resources in the organization to assist in project completion. In some cases, it may take a team of health care professionals who can readily assist the student. Also, colleagues within the organization are less likely to help students who have no real commitment to the organization where their practicum takes place.

As part of the practicum experience, students are also required to disseminate their projects via presentations. This may take the format of a presentation to nurse managers, upper level hospital and/or nursing administrators or specialty meeting groups such as quality council. Thus, the MS student may be viewed through a different lens than previously thought of, that of a nurse leader with valuable contributions and a commitment to the organization in which they are employed.

Practicum experiences need to be tailored to the needs of the student. For example, is the student's goal to be a nurse manager or hold a higher administrative position or perhaps some other leadership position such as Director/Coordinator of Quality Improvement or Management? These positions require a different skill set, therefore, a generic approach to practicum placement should never be undertaken. In line with this, it is also important to note that deliverables may be different for those students already working in a management role vs those students new to management.

This presentation will include evaluative statements that students and their preceptors make about this type of practicum setting and examples of actual graduate practicum projects will be shared to enhance the meeting of the stated objectives. Examples include financial projects, projects related to performance improvement, quality patient safety or contributions to formulating policies or enhancing a Magnet application. Educators in similar situations may find these examples of projects with their benefits and challenges useful in their academic settings when students choose an employment setting.