Title:
Exploring mLearning in Nursing Education

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References:
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Abstract Summary:
The learning possibilities afforded by mobile devices are virtually limitless. This presentation will explore the use of mobile learning within undergraduate nursing education and the impact that it can have.

Learning Activity:

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE
The learner will be able to discuss how mobile learning can be utilized in nursing education.	Describe content providing to learner to meet objective.
The learner will be able to describe strategies for how to implement mobile device learning activities.	Describe content providing to learner to meet objective.

Abstract Text:

Introduction

Evidence has demonstrated the benefits that the use of mobile devices and mobile learning (mLearning) can have on students' educational experience. mLearning can be defined as the use of mobile devices for the enrichment of student learning. In fact, on a recent Mobile IT survey of college students, 67% of those surveyed believed that mobile devices are critical to their academic success and use their devices for academic activities. mLearning allows a paradigm shift from the traditional educator centered classroom to a more learner centered approach. This presentation aims to provide a more in-depth look at the use of mobile devices and mLearning within the nursing curriculum. Topics that will be explored are learning gaps to consider when implementing mobile devices in the classroom, strategies, and examples of ways to introduce mLearning successfully.

Background

Literature identified three driving forces that have brought today's society into the Connected Age. The forces include greater access to broadband, mobile connectivity, the concept of anytime/anyplace, and the presence of social media and social networks in all of our lives. For example, conservative estimates gauge that 90% of adults have a mobile device, i.e. cell phone, and 79% of young adults (aged 18 to 24 years) own smart devices. Furthermore, 73% of adults use social networking sites and over half of social media users log in at least once per day using a smart device. In looking at future trends, teens (aged 13 to 17 years) reported a similar popularity of mobile devices. This trend is also evident within the K-12 education system with a greater focus on the use of mobile devices in the classroom.

Nursing Education

When considering mLearning in nursing education, it is important for nursing educators to consider the opportunities that mLearning can bring for a student. mLearning has the potential to offer educators and students a chance to engage in learning that supersedes both time and geographical restrictions. Additionally, it gives the student a greater degree of independence versus that afforded by the traditional four walls of a classroom. Lastly, mobile devices are effective for different learning styles such as verbal, visual, and kinesthetic. A few examples of mLearning use within nursing education include a high degree of use in clinical areas and simulation exercises. Such as the wide spread use of applications that allow students to access drug information, dieses processes, and care planning at any time and from any location. Students also report the use of cloud platforms, such as Google+, for both nursing and multidisciplinary collaboration. Thirdly, the use of online applications for instant, real-time access provides students with data similar to that of patient point of care results.

Gaps in mLearning

One important element to consider is the proficiency gap that exists not only in the student learners, but also with the nursing educator. Research supports proficiency and confidence with the use of mobile devices in learning is linked to a crucial factor of self-efficacy for users. Another point to consider is the multigenerational differences that may exist among adult learners and nursing educators. Regardless of generational variances, students and educators need positive perceptions of their skills with mobile devices to embrace mLearning and its vast possibilities.

Strategies for mLearning

With the overwhelming amount of content in nursing curricula, pre-class activities with mobile devices can promote engaged learning and improve student outcomes. Formal introduction and training may be necessary for nursing educators. Initially, a student survey may help identify technology literacy levels and mLearning barriers for a nursing course. Well-planned small steps is the best route when introducing a new learning strategy. Faculty should think about which topics or course material might lend itself best to use on a mobile device. Practice activities, communication, group work, videos, and/or web searches on a mobile device can offer many opportunities to help support the student in the transfer of knowledge and development of skills. Conducting pre-course readings and asking students to take a mobile based

pre-course survey on their mobile device prior to beginning the class is one simple way to introduce mLearning in the nursing classroom.

Conclusion/Discussion

The structure and framework of the traditional nursing classroom combined with the use of mobile learning is exciting for educators and students alike. Program use may vary; however, educators must consider the usefulness of mLearning for their students. As mobile devices become more prominent in our world, this suggests how integral they are to the knowledge delivery system in the classroom and keeping students engaged in learning.