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Importance of effective competency assessment to improve nursing competence and patient safety

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One of the biggest challenges in healthcare today; is to ensure a competent workforce to care for patients in an ever changing work environment. Inpatients are more acutely ill and have shorter length of stay in acute care facilities. This places greater demand on nurses in the communities; who have to demonstrate competency in caring for increasingly complex patients. Increasing restrictions on healthcare budgets, staff shortages and higher workloads; place further demands on nurses who have to provide comprehensive care to meet the complex and diverse needs of patients. It is thus vital that nurses continuously improve their own clinical competence and critical thinking skills; and use both in their daily practice. Evaluating nursing competence includes the assessment of Knowledge, Skills and Behavior during patient care. Effective competency assessment is needed during preceptorship to ensure that a new nurse is adapting and performing well in the new clinical setting. But it should also continue after the preceptorship period. Nursing mentors must do regular competency assessments with their mentees, to support continuous growth in knowledge, skills and behavior; and the development of new mentors in the nursing work force. The speaker developed nursing policies, procedures and competency assessment tools in various healthcare facilities. She has firsthand experience of the positive effect of effective competency assessment on nursing practice and –competence, which improves patient care and –safety.

Biography

Gina Granger has completed a Master's Degree in Nursing, a Bachelor Degree in Nursing Education and Community Health Nursing, a Diploma in Midwifery, a  
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