

Abstract for CDNN conference 31st May – 2nd June 2021

Title: Learning from nursing students' experiences and perceptions of their clinical placements in nursing homes: an integrative literature review.

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Abstract

Objectives: This paper aims to investigate pre-registration nursing students' experiences and perceptions of their clinical placements in nursing homes in order to develop recommendations for nurse educators. Evidence indicates that nursing students do not view nursing home placements as favourably as acute hospital placements. Therefore, nurse educators are challenged to facilitate a change in students' perceptions towards working in the nursing home environment.

Design: An integrative literature review allowed for the analysis and synthesis of the data relating to students' experiences and perceptions of nursing home practice, from studies with diverse research designs.

Methods: An electronic database search of CINAHL (Ebsco), Pubmed, British Nursing Database (BND), ERIC and social service abstracts, published from 2008 to April 2020 in English was completed. Papers were included using pre-allocated criteria and 649 qualified for closer examination. After exclusion, 21 papers underwent final analysis and synthesis using NIVIO 12.

Results: Five main themes were derived from the literature; i) the importance of effective supervision; ii) students' experiences and perceptions of the learning environment; iii) understanding the roles of care staff, iv) comprehensive orientation to the learning environment, and v) curriculum preparation. From these five categories, two synthesised themes were developed: nursing home placement encounters and enhancing learning opportunities.

Conclusions: Increasing the visibility of caring for older people in the curriculum is urgent in order to address nursing students' perceived misconceptions about placements in nursing homes. The development of standalone older people pathways, delivered by experienced and knowledgeable faculty, as well as the provision of compulsory clinical placements in settings exclusive to nursing older people and supervised by registered nurses are recommended. Failing to resolve this immediate problem will result in a further shortage of nurses who are adequately prepared to meet future nursing needs.