

Innovations in Education: Assistant Practitioners - shaping the future workforce or changing nurses' roles?

Anneyce Knight anneyce.knight@solent.ac.uk

1. Practical Innovations in Education

Summary

This presentation will discuss the context, roles and education of Assistant Practitioners in the United Kingdom (UK) and explore one specific programme of study. How this role and training may impact on nurse education and educators and/or nurses roles in the future will also be considered.

The innovative collaborative provision between University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust (UK) and Southampton Solent University (UK) to develop the Assistant Practitioners workforce and provide a career pathway was successfully launched in January 2012. The interprofessional Foundation Degrees in Health and Social Care, and the more recently validated Health and Social Care and Administration in conjunction with Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust, have continued to attract students and numbers grow year on year. 2014 has seen the first graduates. Numbers of partner organisations has also grown and now include University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust, Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Isle of Wight NHS, Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust, Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust and shortly Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust.

This development has been very timely in the light of the recommendations made in the final Francis report (2013) concerning the education and regulation of health care support workers. Nevertheless, the development of these Foundation degrees has not been exclusively aimed at healthcare support workers and initially included healthcare science and more recently administration students. This leads to an innovative and enriching interprofessional learning environment. All students are employed by the NHS and funding is provided from Health Education Wessex (an NHS body).

This paper will discuss the joint approach that has been adopted to successfully deliver this course. This will include the 'hub and spoke' structure, academic content, pedagogy and provide an overview of the management processes. In addition, an evaluation of the first cohort's experience will be presented and future developments explored. Finally, the presentation will look at the challenges and opportunities that this provides not only for nurse education and educators but also for registered nurses.

Reference

Francis, R. (2013) Final Report Of The Independent Inquiry Into Care Provided By Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust available at <http://www.midstaffsinquiry.com/pressrelease.html> (accessed 8 July 2013).

Biography

Anneyce Knight has worked in a number of roles within the NHS and the private sector before becoming a lecturer. She joined Southampton Solent University as Senior Lecturer in Health and Social Care in May 2013, from the University of Greenwich where she held a variety of roles including leading on the development of their BSc Health and Wellbeing and was European Lead and Erasmus Co-ordinator for their School of Health and Social Care. Anneyce is Course Lead on the innovative joint partnership Foundation Degree in Health and Social Care with Southampton NHS Foundation Trust and Health Education Wessex, which is integral to developing the new roles for Assistant Practitioners. Her range of publications is extensive and she has presented at national and international conferences on a variety of health and wellbeing issues. She has also been a visiting lecturer at several international universities. Her research interests focus on Wellbeing -policy and practice, Narrative-Based Medicine and she has a passion for the Medical Humanities and its role in enhancing patient care.