Title: An Innovative Use of Simulation in the Transition of Immigrant Nurses to Practice in the United States

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Poster & Demo (Electricity) Category: Education-Curriculum Description

Introduction: This poster addresses an innovative experience that was part of the WIN Nursing Transition Program. The WIN (Workforce Improvement for Immigrant Nurses) program prepares nurses who earned their credentials in other countries to become licensed to work in Oregon. The twelve students come from: Bosnia, Germany, Norway, Tonga, Philippines, Japan, Cuba, Romania, Czech Republic & Ukraine.

The chronic nursing shortage in the United States has created the need to educate more foreign nurses to practice in United States healthcare settings. WIN was designed as a comprehensive 13-month program (September to October) developed to prepare foreign nurses for the RN NCLEX and for nursing practice. In the state of Oregon, Nursing regulation prohibits these pre-licensure nursing students from obtaining clinical experiences in hospitals and other healthcare settings. Therefore, simulation was used an alternative clinical practice opportunity for this group who relied on simulation for their primary clinical experience.

Methods: High-fidelity simulation experiences were designed to meet the specific needs of these unique learners.

The first of six sessions consisted of a demonstration of a simulation by the faculty and debriefing involving all participants. The purpose of the demonstration was to expose the learners to this experiential practice activity in a high tech learning environment and to help address their fears. Subsequent scenarios were designed to reinforce concepts students were studying in their theory courses with emphasis on communicating within the healthcare team. Scenarios designed by faculty focused on high prevalence healthcare problems and emphasized the professional scope of RN practice in the United States.

Students were also required to write and conduct their own simulation scenarios with faculty coaching. They worked in small groups and their goal was to integrate evidence based practice into the scenarios they wrote. The students also debriefed their own scenarios as another method of practicing professional communication.

Results: The National League for Nursing (NLN) Satisfaction and Self-Confidence Scale was used to evaluate students' perceptions of simulation. Early results show that the use of simulation was an effective learning activity for this group of students. This is the third cohort to complete the program and the first two cohorts had an NCLEX passing rate greater than 90%.

Discussion & Conclusions: Simulation is an effective tool for providing alternative clinical experiences emphasizing communication within a healthcare team and the RN scope of practice in the United States. Simulation also serves as a platform to examine roles, comparing the differences between the RN role in the United States and participants' previous clinical roles and experiences. Faculty and students were satisfied with the process and the outcomes of the project.