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Practice, Protocols, and Performance: A Descriptive Study with Instrument Development

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Researcher's Proposal

Research and Creative Experience for Undergraduates (RCEU) Proposal

Practice, Protocols, and Performance: A Descriptive Study with Instrument Development

Faculty/Research Mentor

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Project Summary

Overview/Specific Aims. Protocols guide standardized practice in healthcare to promote optimal patient outcomes. The American Heart Association provides educational opportunities and practice certifications required by healthcare agencies. Basic Cardiac Life Support (BCLS), Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS), and Neonatal Advances Life Support (NALS) are common certifications required by healthcare professionals when working with adults, children, and babies.

Healthcare professionals are often required to act in an emergent situation when an adult, child, or baby experience a compromised airway. Protocols are established to guide healthcare professionals in emergent situations, and the need for airway clearance is an example that would require a nurse to act emergently. Nurses encounter multiple activities everyday when caring for patients from dispensing medications, charting on a computer, assessing patients frequently, managing physician orders of client care, engaging family questions, and performing emergent functions when a patient's health declines. What are barriers and facilitators to performing protocol driven emergent interventions? Do nurses always follow protocols when a patient's airway is compromised? How do nurses manage emergent situations when performing numerous routine patient care activities?

The specific aim of this study is to develop an instrument to assess nursing knowledge and performance related to implementing practice protocols of BCLS, PALS, and NALS.

This project is suitable for an honors thesis research project, and I am requesting priority consideration for a student who is in the honors program.

Student Involvement

Student Duties. The undergraduate student will collaborate with a team of researchers, Dr. O'Neal (Nursing) and Dr. Ellise Adams (Nursing Honors Director), to contribute new knowledge about practice, protocols, and performance. The student will collaborate with the CLEAR Team (Clearance of the Airways), which involves three honor UG students, a master's student, and two doctor of nursing practice students.

Student Qualifications. The student will be expected to be autonomous, certified in basic life support, and a minority male to promote diversity to our established research team. Male nursing students are considered a minority as the national average of males in the field of nursing is 10%.

Student Benefits. The RCEU experience will involve working with nursing faculty and an established research team that promotes undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral student work. This opportunity will provide the undergraduate student an opportunity to learn about research development, ethics, and research team collaboration. The student will be directly involved in the design, instrument development, instrument dissemination, analysis, and scholarly dissemination. The person will collect, enter, and analyze the data with the assistance of the faculty. The student is expected to present not only at the RCEU conference, but additional nursing conferences as identified by the faculty mentor.

This RCEU experience provides a clear benefit of learning new techniques and being exposed to new environments that is over and above what is routinely provided in the nursing program. An outcome of this RCEU project is that the student will develop an abstract fall 2016 for submission to the Southern Nursing Research Conference. The student will be involved in the development of the abstract, presentation, and a possible manuscript related to this research project.

Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of summer 2016, the student will

1. Conduct a literature review on BCLS, PALS, and NALS protocol related to airway clearance
2. Review information on instrument development
3. Develop an instrument to assess practice, protocol knowledge, and performance.
4. Demonstrate knowledge by presenting at conferences.

Mentor Supervision and Interaction

The student will have weekly meetings with Dr. O'Neal to discuss research progress and evaluate student developed learning outcomes. Dr. O'Neal will actively provide leadership and mentorship to assist the student in meeting his/her goals associated with this project. The selected student who is interested in this study will develop new skills of working with a research team, instrument development, abstract submission, poster production, and possibly manuscript submission. This project meets criteria for the honors program, and I am requesting priority consideration for a male nursing student who is in the honors program.