The mentor role in supporting and assessing competency and progression of students

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NMC Standards to Support Learning and Assessment in Practice

• Stage 2 outcomes

• Domain 3 - accountability and assessment
NMC Scholarship Report (Duffy 2003)
Mentorship preparation

Include the topic of:

- dealing with a failed clinical assessment
- dealing with practical aspects and emotional reactions
- the formal processes

Failure early in the programme preferable to failure later in the programme
Recommendations

Nurse Education Programmes

- Tripartite arrangements to support mentors in their clinical assessment role
- Lecturers have a role in clinical assessment
- Debriefing with mentors after a failed assessment
- Passing on of information between placements
- Learning outcomes pertinent to professional behaviour and attitude be given prominence within clinical assessment documentation
- Cognisance be given to the time commitment associated with a possible fail scenario
Recommendations

Future research

- National survey to establish how many students fail practice on clinical grounds
- Lecturer’s view of the tensions that exist
- Explore ‘borderline status’ in clinical assessment
- Further review and debate regarding clinical practice assessment tools
Mentors need more support to fail poorly performing students

Sue Longmore, who led the study, said the support was crucial to improving student performance. She said mentors were a vital part of the process, helping students overcome challenges and providing a supportive environment.

"Mentors are essential in helping students to succeed," she said. "We need to ensure that they have the resources and training they need to do their job effectively."

The study, which was conducted at a number of universities across Scotland, found that mentors were often not given sufficient support or training. This meant that they were unable to effectively help students who were struggling.

"We need to address this issue," said Professor Longmore. "It is not good enough for mentors to just be given a title and expected to perform. They need to be properly trained and supported."
‘Failing’ literature

- Gainsbury (2010)
- Mead et al (2011)
- Heaslip and Scammell (2012)

Key messages

- 10-40% mentors reluctant or under confident
- Failure in theory outstrips practice by 5:1
‘Failing’ literature

Key messages

- Skingley et al (2007)
- Jervis and Tilki (2011)
- Black et al (2013)

- Explore beliefs, expectations & prejudices
- Help to deliver difficult messages
- Emotional support
- Moral courage
International ‘Failing’ literature

• Luhanga et al (2007, 2008a, 2008b)
• Tanicala et al (2011)
• Larocque and Luhanga (2013)
• DeBrew & Lewallen (2014)
Literature from other disciplines

- Dudek et al (2005)
- Cleland et al (2009)
- Finch (2009)
- Parker (2010)
- Basnett & Sheffield (2010)
- Furness (2011)

- Finch & Taylor (2013)
- Malihi-Shoja et al (2013)
- Poletti & Anka (2013)
- Rawles (2013)
- Schaub & Dalrymple (2013)
- Eno & Kerr (2013)
Mentorship literature

Chandan and Watts (2012)
Recommendations Mentorship preparation

2004
Include the topic of:
• dealing with a failed clinical assessment
• dealing with practical aspects and emotional reactions
• the formal processes

2014
• Consider the selection of mentors – choice?
• Explore the emotional aspects of assessing competence
• Introduce the concepts of courage and resilience
• Coaching / Constructive feedback skills
• Role modelling/ Escalating concerns
• Challenging students constructively
Recommendations – Nursing programmes and providers

2004

- Tripartite arrangements to support mentors in their clinical assessment role
- Lecturers have a role in clinical assessment
- Debriefing with mentors after a failed assessment
- Passing on of information between placements
- Learning outcomes pertinent to professional behaviour and attitude be given prominence within clinical assessment documentation
- Cognisance be given to the time commitment associated with a possible fail scenario

2014

- Identify and support mentors who lack confidence to fail
- Tripartite arrangements to support mentors and supervising mentors in their assessment role
- Lecturer’s role in assessment/practice education infrastructure
- Debriefing with mentors after a failed assessment
- Cognisance be given to the time commitment associated with mentorship (workforce planning)
Recommendations – Future Research & Debate

2004
• National survey to establish how many students fail practice on clinical grounds
• Lecturer’s view of the tensions that exist
• Explore ‘borderline status’ in clinical assessment
• Further review and debate regarding clinical practice assessment tools

2014
• Practice Education Facilitators’ views of the tensions that exist
• Explore ‘borderline status’ in practice based assessment
• Research regarding practice assessment tools
• Student’s perspective of failing
• Widespread debate and discussion regarding the challenges highlighted by Robinson et al (2012)
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References


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Larocque S, Luhanga FL (2013) Exploring the issue of failing to fail in a nursing program. *International Journal of Nursing Education Scholarship*. 10 1 1-8


