Health Literacy in Nurse Practitioner Education: The NONPF Perspective

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September 14, 2006
Questions

- Is health literacy a priority addressed in nurse practitioner education?
- What are the strategies for integrating in NP education?
- Are NP graduates tested for health literacy?
Who We Are

The National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties (NONPF) represents over 1250 nurse practitioner educators.

Mission

To provide leadership in promoting quality nurse practitioner education at the national and international levels.
NONPF Activities

Develops curriculum guidelines and program standards to provide guidance to NP educators

Since 1990 has established core competencies for NP graduates – most recent edition spring 2006

Specialty competencies for primary care, psychiatric-mental health, and acute care released in 1998, 2003, and 2004 (respectively)
Fn 27 urdlzxgiuxk, hmil oonazlrbai qvto biehrhnurod.
Up bo jmmjuufbutf, mfuufst bsfpomz mfuufst. Cpplt, qbqfst, boembcfmt nblf op npsftfof uibo epft uif hbscmffzf dibsu.
To 27 million people, both sides of this page look identical.

Up bo jmmjufsbuf, mfuufst bsf pomz mfuufst. Cpplt, qbqfst, boe mbcfmt nblf op npsf tfotf uibo epft uif hbscmf fzf dibsu.

To an illiterate, letters are only letters. Books, papers, and labels make no more sense than does the garble of an eye chart.
Health Literacy and NPs

- Improvement in health literacy improved patient outcomes
  - less hospitalizations
  - decreased annual health costs
  - decreased used of emergency services
  - increased use of preventative services
  - better control on patients with chronic diseases

- NPs often treat vulnerable populations and have long-standing educational focus on health promotion and disease prevention
National Attention on Health Literacy

- 2005 National Primary Care Week
  *Breaking Down Barriers: Health Literacy in Community Health*
NONPF Competencies

- Teaching-Coaching Function domain

  Competencies in this domain include:
  - Assesses the patient’s educational needs
  - Creates an effective learning environment
  - Designs a personalized plan for learning
  - Provides health education
  - Coaches the patient for behavioral changes
  - Evaluates the outcomes of patient education

- Management of patient health domain

  “incorporates community needs, strengths, and resources into practice”
NONPF Guidelines

- 2006 Guidelines includes section on health literacy to give added emphasis for need to include in the NP curriculum.

- Guidelines include recommended skills for NP graduates:
  - Critique patient education materials or presentations currently used to ensure that they are appropriate for the specific patient population.
  - Assess the reading level of patient education materials so as to assign appropriately to patients.
Guidelines Recommendations cont.

- Adapt or create new patient education materials for patient population. Includes visual, as well as text, revisions.

- Comprehend a variety of teaching strategies beyond printed materials.

- Assess patient self-care and whether written materials are effective educational strategies.

- Demonstrate effective communication skills in patient encounters.
NP as Patient Educator

*Shaping New Paradigms in Nurse Practitioner Education* (2004 NONPF monograph) includes paper on health literacy.

- Emphasizes role of NP as patient educator.
- Recommends student preparation in assessing and developing Web-based and printed patient education material.
- Faculty role in teaching NPs – e.g., how to use software to assess reading level of patient; how to find relevant Web resources.
Penn Experience

- Lecture
  - Assess & create patient materials
  - Reading level
  - Graphic elements

- Case studies
  - Appropriate populations

- Incorporate into clinical practice
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Practice Doctorate

NP educational preparation evolving to practice doctorate

- NONPF study of practice doctorate included OJIN article (2005) - identified health literacy as a topic needing to be addressed further in curriculum at practice doctorate level.

- NP practice doctorate skills build on core, more emphasis in some areas, and more opportunity for clinical training and integration of concepts.

- New NP practice doctorate competencies include information literacy of the NP – important to be good clinician and patient educator.
NP Certification

- 5 certifying bodies
  American Academy of NPs; American Assn. of Critical Care Nursing; American Nurses Credentialing Ctr; Nat’l Certification Corp; Pediatric Nursing Certification Board

- Core and specialty competencies guide NP certification; however, exams based on role delineation studies and developed by test committees.

- ANCC 2005 Family NP Review Resource Manual recognizes health literacy as an important practice issue for which NPs must be prepared.
Next Steps

- NONPF developing Web-based list of resources relevant to health literacy. Will be available to faculty, students, and others.

- New teaching strategies
Guidelines and competencies in place – now need to assess NP programs for extent to which health literacy is emphasized and integrated in the curriculum
Thank You

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