**Challenges that affect the transition from learning to clinical practice in Nursing and innovative solutions to this challenge**

The onset of a Nursing Practitioners' career can be intimidating as a wrong decision can lead to a grave medical mistake that could be fatal. The transition from being a student to be an advanced practitioner is quite challenging and discussed below is how the learning process can affect the transition to clinical practice and the innovative solution for the challenge.

1. **The fusion of theoretical knowledge and practical skills**

One of the major setbacks in the nursing practice is the preparation of the practitioners to be calm, collected, efficient and capable when they initially take up patient appointments. Transitioning from learning in class to clinical application of this knowledge is a challenging step that can result to reduced quality of care to the patient as the training process, and practical application of the skills are distinct cases. In some cases, the educational tutors and clinical practitioners have conflicting confidence in a student, and this increases the challenge in transitioning to clinical practice (Hezaveh, Rafii, & Seyedfatemi, 2014).

American Association of College Nursing Students (AACN) (2008) has confidence that educational training for nurses should enable them to acquire primary levels of efficiency and safety in clinical practice. Reviews of this have indicated that the training program has not been sufficient and nurses have unsuccessfully prepared for the harsh clinical environment (Hezaveh, Rafii, & Seyedfatemi, 2014).

 Long distance learning which has the advantage of the flexibility that allows students to modify their learning time according to their life plans has also significantly affected the transition to real life clinical practice as Nursing requires a fusion of theoretical expertise and practical efficiency (Bradshaw & Lowenstein, 2014). Incorporation of practical sessions to online learners is challenging and may affect their transition to clinical practice as they will be practically required to apply the knowledge acquired in class to real time patients.

1. **Solutions for improving practical diagnostic and caregiving skills**

One of the solutions to encourage confidence and practical skills in caregiving involves internships and residency but before this big step that involves real patients (Bradshaw & Lowenstein, 2014); use of role modeling, standardized patients (SPs) who are actors trained to provide medical history and present illness is essential to evaluate readiness of the students to face real time case studies. Use of SPs enhances effective communication and interpersonal skills, bedside behaviour and caregiving which includes appropriate diagnosis. This will adequately prepare the practitioners for clinical practice as their confidence, and diagnosis skills will be enhanced through practice. Usually, it requires the physical presence of both the practitioner and the standardised patient hence problematic for distance learners (Ballman, 2016). An innovative solution is therefore required to involve them in this essential process of acquiring practical clinical skills.

1. **Innovative solutions to improve practical skills in long-distance students**

Improvements in technology that aim to make distance learning more interactive are vital in fused theoretical and practical courses such as nursing. Role modelling is essential in training of nursing practitioners as it nourishes their skills for patient assessment and diagnosis. Face to face students enjoy the ability to perform history taking and physically examine review, instruct lab tests and review results but there is a challenge for distance learning to get a similar experience.

Development of Interactive Case Studies (ICSs) which is a virtual patient interaction that mimics a patient while giving the student a chance to practice critical thinking, to solve problems based on clinical arguments is a solution for distance learners to be more practical. This web-based design gives access to many students at their convenient times as it is recorded and hence can offer numerous sessions with the SP that encourages mastery of a concept. Face to face students may have limited time with an SP, and the conditions may be too stressful hence interfere with their expression of skills and mastery of concept (Ballman, 2016).

**Conclusion**

A study showed that the ability to determine the correct diagnosis is equal in both on-site and long-distance learners; ICS experience is satisfactory with an increased level of confidence in the students and it demonstrated the positive value of role modelling (Hezaveh, Rafii, & Seyedfatemi, 2014). ICS experience makes online students engage with SPs as it would have been on site and is available to all students.

**References**

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