Cross-Cultural Nursing Experience in Ghana – Student Perspectives
Laurentian University School of Nursing

Conflict Disclosure Information:

Presenters: Karla Dozzi, RN, BScN, MN – Course Professor
Micala Mahoney-Ashberry – Nursing Student
Taija Kelly – Nursing Student
Catherine Rochon – Nursing Student

Title of Presentation: Cross Cultural Nursing Experience

We have no financial or personal relationships to disclose

Objectives

1. To portray student experience of nursing abroad in a developing nation through discussion of classroom and clinical experiences
2. To explain the importance of pre-departure preparation and reorientation (Ryan & Tidwell, 2002; Forum on Education Abroad, 2009; Ash, Clayton & Atkinson, 2005; Mesirow, 1991).
3. To present how this course was a valuable aspect of the nursing curriculum and how it explores the influence of culture and geography on people’s health (Lee, Pang, Wong & Chan, 2007; Button et al, 2005; Kirkham, Hofwegen & Pankratz, 2009).
4. To present future possibilities and recommendations for this course.

Course Description

- Course title: NURS 2816: Cross-Cultural Nursing - International.
- 36 hours in class preparation (pre-departure)
- 2 weeks/100 community based clinical hours in rural community settings of Kumasi, Ghana, West Africa.
- Students participated in health based screening as well as health education and assisted in client consultation.
- Completion of reflective journals
- In class reorientation
- Class presentation of their learning plan and recommendations.

Classroom

Positives
- Development of group dynamics
- Personal development
- Open forum for discussion/brainstorming
- Thought process development

Negatives
- Long hours and plenty of new content
- No opportunity to apply concepts learned in class
- Development of learning plans
Clinical

Positives

- Application of learnt skills (i.e. cultural competence)
- Greater sense of community
- Logistics
- Community connections
- First hand exposure
- Development of a broader world view

Negatives

- Poor organization
- Conflicting boundaries: scope of practice
- Infection control standards
- Translation
- Personal objectives
- Lack of sustainability

Future Recommendations

- 36 hours be spread out, rather than condensed into one week
- Advertising & Cost Reduction
- Sustainability projects (Leffers, Jeanne 2011; Memmott, R.J. et al., 2010; Levi, Amy 2009)
- Profit based organizations not ideal – avoid “voluntourism” (DeCamp, 2011)
- Opportunities for interprofessional participation (Cooper et al, 2009)

Final Thoughts

References

Krehm SR, Hofbauer LV, Parker D. (2009). Deepening the vision: sustaining social consciousness within nursing students following international learning experiences. International Journal of Nursing Education Scholarship, 6(1).