

A UNIQUE APPROACH TO SUCCESSION PLANNING FOR DIABETES NURSES: EVALUATION OF AN EMERGING PROGRAMME

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INTRODUCTION

Background & Significance of the internship programme

The number of New Zealand adults over 15 years of age diagnosed with diabetes at the end of 2012 was 225,731 (Diabetes New Zealand, 2013). Significantly, the rates for Maori and Pacifica peoples are up to three times higher than the rest of the population (MOH, 2010). Nurses are positioned as key practitioners in the response to care and prevention of diabetes. Yet by 2017 we expect a critical nursing shortage. Internships are a way of attracting and retaining nurses to the profession.

Purpose of the programme

To develop nurses with specialist knowledge across all areas of diabetes care with the capability to become future CNSs.

To engage in succession planning to ensure a highly skilled nursing workforce in diabetes care

Specific aims of the evaluation

- To understand the elements of the programme and how they were linked to the overall aims.
- To explore the effectiveness of the programme in developing knowledge and skills to respond to diabetes care
- To present timely reports to the management of the Regional Diabetes Centre to inform ongoing planning and development of the programme

PROGRAMME DESIGN

Recruitment to the programme

The programme is complex in that it has a number of different parts and includes both interns and Clinical Nurse Specialists. Four nurses were selected for the programme, 3 were employed by the WRDC and 1 was employed in primary health in a GP practice.



METHODOLOGY

The evaluation was a process evaluation of an emerging programme. Feedback was gained from key stakeholder groups using semi-structured interviews.

Group interviews were conducted with the Clinical Nurse Specialists at the WRDC at their request.

Interns completed three short questionnaires asking about;

- Their experience of their practice related to the speciality area of diabetes at the beginning (1) and end (2) of the first rotation; and,
- At the end of the first rotation (3) regarding their experience of the internship programme overall.

RESULTS

Knowledge, skills & confidence development over 1st rotation

The interns first rotation was not in an area where they had previous experience.

INTERNS	KNOWLEDGE	SKILLS	CONFIDENCE
Intern 1	4	6	5
Intern 2	3	7	5
Intern 3	6/7	7	7

They experienced an increase in knowledge, skills and confidence by the end of the first rotation. However, one of the interns experienced a reduction in confidence in that area of diabetes practice.

INTERNS	OVERALL EXPERIENCE	MENTOR	SKILL ACQUISITION	KNOWLEDGE GAIN	OFF-SITE SUPERVISION	ORGANISATION
INTERN 1	6	5	5	5	10	10
INTERN 2	7	7	7	7	10	10
INTERN 3	10	10	10	8	8	10

Figure 3. Interns' experience of the programme overall on a scale of 1-10, 10 being high

DISCUSSION

- Overall, stakeholders were highly supportive of the programme, and believed it was working well.
- Cohesive team environment and flexibility of management to respond quickly to changes were significant strengths.
- The primary health partnership was an important aspect of developing diabetes care where it is needed. *All nursing staff* at the Medical Centre increased their knowledge and skills as a result of involvement.
- The medical staff at the Medical Centre and the WRDC commented on the high standard of the interns' practice and development over the course of the first rotation.
- External supervision was a highly valued aspect of the programme.
- At the end of the 2year programme 2 nurses have been appointed as CNSs and one is working towards NP