Professionalism & Ethical Comportment through Intentional Role Modeling

Mary Ann Fegan RN, MN

Objectives

1. Define and discuss the concepts of professionalism, formation, and ethical comportment in relation to ensuring quality of health care.
2. Identify various ethical concerns and themes which capture major notions of good that are central to nursing practice.
3. Explore the concept of intentional role modeling as a valuable clinical teaching approach.
4. Develop and discuss clinical teaching approaches that would support students’ development of everyday ethical comportment and formation of their nursing identity, character, and skilled capacities.

Core Elements – Fostering Transformative Learning

1. Individual experience
2. Critical reflection
3. Dialogue
4. A holistic orientation
5. Awareness of context
6. An authentic practice

(Havens, 2010)

Professionalism

• “the skill, good judgment, and polite behaviour that is expected from a person who is trained to do a job well” (Merriam-Webster, 2014)
• RNAO BPG provides approach to professionalism:
  – “professionalism requires that nurses in all roles demonstrate professional standards. Nurses put into action their values and attributes of professionalism when providing nursing care and collaborating with patients, nurse colleagues, other members of the health care team, and nursing students”

Formation

Benner (2008):
• ‘formation’ as the formation of nurses’ identity, skilled know-how, knowledge use, and character
• students ‘form’ in a process that moves beyond the knowledge content of nursing to the moral content of the practice – the obligations entailed, the demands imposed – and thus to the moral formation of the nurse

Ethical Comportment

• Comportment
  – “manner of acting; behaviour; bearing” (Merriam-Webster, 2014)
  – “dignified manner or conduct” (Princeton’s WordNet, 2014)
  – Heidegger: human comportment refers to ‘being in the world’
• Benner’s “ethical comportment” refers to everyday ethics, the ethics of care and responsibility, notions of good in practice
Ethical Concerns
(identified in Carnegie Study, Benner et al, 2009)
1. Meeting the patient as a person
2. Preserving the dignity and personhood of patients
3. How to respond to substandard practice
4. Patient advocacy
5. Students and faculty seriously engaged in learning to do ‘good’ nursing practice
6. Learning how to be present with patient and family suffering

Role Modeling
• “Setting an example is not the main means of influencing another, it is the only means.”
  ~ Albert Einstein

“Role Model”
• Someone who sets a positive example and is worthy of imitation
• Serves as a catalyst to transform as they instruct, counsel, guide and facilitate the development of others
• People attempt to emulate a role model’s behaviour and assimilate the role model’s attitudes and values
(Perry, 2009)

Effective Role Models
• Clinical competence
• Teaching skills
• Personal qualities
• Role models inspire and teach by example
• Role models function in formal, informal and hidden curriculum
(Cruess et al., 2008)

Intentional Role Modeling
• Unintentional role modeling
  • Intentional Role Modeling
    – Awareness of being a role model
    – Time to teach
    – Importance of critical reflection
    • Making the implicit explicit
(Cruess et al., 2008)
Learning Activity

1. How to respond to substandard practice
   *ie: poor practice or theory practice gap?*

2. Learning how to be present with patient and family suffering
   *ie: value of “presence” and use of silence*

3. Meeting the patient as a person
   *ie: “the diabetic in room 8”*

4. Challenges of social media

Learning Activity

*Develop and discuss clinical teaching approaches that would support students’ development of everyday ethical comportment and formation of their nursing identity, character, and skilled capacities.*