Introduction

Preceptor is a person who is responsible for skill training of a novice student/employee. In nursing, the final year students and newly graduated nurses are trained for 3 to 6 months under the trained preceptor. Every teaching institution will have a set of designated and trained preceptors who are responsible for the training of its students. In most of the parts of the world, the preceptors are paid an extra remuneration/incentive for their added responsibility. In the following pages I will be discussing few aspects of preceptorship.

Who is a preceptor?

A teacher or someone who trains people how to do a job.

What is a preceptorship?

A period of practical training for a student or novice under the supervision of a preceptor. Preceptorship is a dynamic and complex relationship that can support growth, increase synergy, and develop ways to succeed as a nurse in an ever changing health care environment. (Barker, 2010).

Preceptor Characteristics

Following qualities are expected in a preceptor. They are: Clinical Expertise, Interest in Teaching, Positive Professional Image, Effective Role Model, Strong Interpersonal Skills, Ability to Determine Goals and Priorities, Desire to Share Knowledge and Skills, Demonstrate Understanding of Organizational Policies/Legislation.

Preceptor qualities valued by students

A good preceptor would possess the qualities such as Helpful, flexible, dependable, caring and fair, humorous, consistent, warm, empathetic, good communication skills, willing to work with beginners, respectful, interested in continuing education, enjoy teaching, motivated, good role model, enthusiastic, commitment to the student and able to deal with conflict.

What is expected of a preceptor?

When not to precept?

If a preceptor experiences any of the following, he/she is not expected to precept. They are: No interest in teaching, Burnout, No patience with learners, Poor self-confidence, Student is friend or relative, Less than one year’s experience in your role, Site with student’s relatives in administrative roles, Site of student’s employment

Preceptor ship Triad

Preceptorship Triad

Role of a preceptor

i. Help students in formulating their clinical learning objectives and guide them towards achieving the objectives.

ii. Motivate, guide and supervise students in the clinical area to achieve their objectives.

iii. Provide clinical teaching and individual guidance to students in the clinical area on a regular basis.

iv. Attend clinical presentations for the assigned students and give feedback about their performance.

v. Review and give feedback on the written case report presentation and all other related assignments.

vi. Help the students in preparing their duty roster in consultation with the preceptor.

vii. Assess the progress of the student and discuss progress with the course coordinator.

viii. Give and document weekly feedback given to the students regarding their strengths and weaknesses in clinical performance in the students’ log book.

ix. Guide students and discuss with them all hospital policies followed during nursing care and patient care.

x. Resolve clinical problems related to students’ performance and inform the course coordinator.

xi. Work collaboratively with the instructor and maintain attendance and do the clinical evaluation of the students.

xii. Support the college in preparation and implementation of all the related evaluations and examinations

Challenges faced by Preceptors

1. Preceptors preventing the reporting of a learner who performed poorly
   - Lack of knowledge of what to specifically document
   - Fear/anticipation of an appeal process
   - Lack of remediation options Lack of documentation

2. When assessing the negative behaviours of a learner, preceptors may feel judgmental or ill at ease

References


