

Delivering a validated Wound Care Course in Malaysia

The 'Fly In' Faculty

Introduction

The health system in the UK is highly respected worldwide and consequently health professional education is also highly valued. University of Hertfordshire has had significant experience and success in delivering university awards overseas but the delivery of a BSc (Hons) International Nursing top up degree was a very new venture for the School of Nursing & Midwifery, which to date has more traditionally focussed on preparing students for professional roles as nurses and midwives and providing post qualification educational opportunities.

The new post qualification awards are delivered in Malaysia in a number of Colleges. The first cohort of students from KDU College in Penang commenced their studies in September 2008 with a Wound Assessment and Management module. Teaching was provided in 2 blocks of one week (3 months apart) with ongoing support, guidance and assessment preparation provided through on line resources.

Delivery of the module presented challenges in relation to teaching and learning strategies that are accessible and acceptable to Malaysian students but also affirmation of the internationalised agenda of healthcare provision and the knowledge and understanding that underpins high quality clinical care.

Preparation for teaching

Preparation for teaching felt quite stressful with no experience of Malaysian health care or culture a considerable amount of time was spent accessing web based information and liaising with commercial colleagues who had international links.

Malaysian nurse training is reminiscent of training in the UK prior to introduction of 'Project 2000'. There is a strong emphasis on the development of practical skills and task orientated care. Nurses are not expected to challenge the medical staff. The amount and standard of care provided varies considerably depending on what the patient can afford. Health education and health promotion are seen as low priority and much home care is provided by relatives or paid assistants.

Wound care is a relatively unknown speciality, how ever some of the larger hospitals do have wound care or ulcer teams. Positions on these teams develop because of an interest or working on a ward with a high number of wounds. There is no recognised training.

Student preparation



Students received an induction CD with information and video capture on using the managed learning environment (StudyNet) as well as help with English for academic purposes



Class of 2010



The course was well advertised on enormous banners all around town!



Classroom facilities were excellent and spacious



There was a good clinical space to facilitate practical teaching



Malaysian culture combines a mix of the traditional with modern



Course delivery

Initially much of the content was delivered in a lecture style but it was very quickly apparent that the students preferred a more active style of learning!



Student Support

Students were initially reluctant to ask questions in the classroom as there was a considerable mix of experience, some newly qualified staff nurses alongside ward sisters with 25 years experience. The hierarchical structure of care delivery was very apparent. Students preferred to queue at the end of each session to ask questions privately. In some cases this related to 'loss of face' but was also in part due to anxiety about the standard of English. In reality the level of spoken English was very good. This was overcome by asking students to write their questions on post it notes and then deal with them at the beginning of the next session and also by incorporating them within group work activities.

Support was offered between blocks and after the 2nd block via StudyNet, email and Skype tutorials. Electronic submission of assignments was well liked by the students.

Assignments

Plagiarism was a particularly difficult area, within the Malaysian culture it is accepted practice to quote the expert and students initially struggled with changing this view. Formative work was very helpful in identifying this trend.

Marking proved challenging, the content was clearly good but language usage was sometimes 'interesting' and the clinical care provided although clearly accepted as standard in Malaysia varied considerably from that in the UK.

Other outcomes

Several students have been able to make significant changes in clinical practice;

One student has been able to replace the use of EUSOL packs in peri anal wounds in children with a hydrofiber dressing following discussions with the Consultant surgeons

One student has changed the solution of choice for cleansing in her hospital from hydrogen peroxide to saline

Two students have had work accepted for publication.

A Malaysian Wound Care Nurses Facebook page has been set up with the view to starting a National wound care group.