INNOVATION AND CONTEMPORARY PRACTICE

Problem Based Learning (PBL)
Christine Cartwright – Senior Lecturer

INTRODUCTION TO PBL

The use of technology enhanced learning (TEL) in the classroom is an area of great diversity and varied approaches for most teaching establishments. As early as 2000, The National Educational Technology Plan (2005) highlighted the abilities of students to access technology to support their own learning far outpaced that of the teaching workforce. There is now great opportunity for educational institutions to use a variety of TEL approaches including visual learning environments (VLE), web tools such as podcasts, wikis, and blogs (Richardson 2015).

Pickingar (2015) states that students enjoy using new technology or having lectures delivered in a way that is different, provided it is of benefit to them. The pedagogical approach to this style of learning describes the flexible benefits of TEL as creating an archived and shared resource of information, and participation from students which can include the use of pictures, audio, video as well as written text for example (Richardson 2015).

This poster will focus on a problem based learning (PBL) method which was incorporated in the Year 2 (level 5) module ’Care of the Older Person’. This method was used to encourage students to identify and develop a variety of clinical assessment skills based on a short 10 minute video of Peter Thursby’s (Innovations in Dementia, 2010) autobiographical account of his life and career.

PBL links to the Staffordshire University Graduate Attributes strategy to promote and develop skills, such as enquiry based approaches, PBL links into the Staffordshire University Graduate Attributes strategy.

WHY USE PBL?

The BSc (Hons) Nursing Practice programme for pre-registration nurses is over a three-year period, where students develop and demonstrate academic evidence based knowledge, skills and assessed clinical practice within the academic arena and clinical practice areas. The programme is validated by the Nursing and Midwifery Council, and in their document Standards for Education (NMC 2010).

The NMC states: "As autonomous practitioners, nurses will provide essential care to a highly varied and provide complex care using the best available evidence and technology where appropriate" (p4, 2010)

It is incumbent upon nurse educators to ensure that student nurses have exposure to a variety of different learning experiences including TEL. Shepherd’s (2009) paper discussed degree level education for pre-register nurses, and focused not only the age range of students (averaging 30 years old), but adding that nursing is emotionally and academically demanding, requiring commitment to professional values.

Using a method such as PBL to promote learning which can be applied to the clinical area is advantageous and will equip students in their future roles as nurses. Furthermore, it will bridge the gap between answering concerns about such programmes lacking sufficient practical clinical experience. Clouston et al (2010) and, Bourd and Feletti (1997) highlight PBL as creating learning opportunities for students by presenting realistic problems from the practice area and thereby educational theory is linked to practice.

WHAT IS PBL AND HOW WAS IT DELIVERED?

(TEACHING METHODOLOGY)

PBL and how it was used. The use of PBL was incorporated in a pre-registration nursing programme, it was introduced at Year 2 in 'Care of the Older Person' module. This module runs twice a year and across two university sites (Royal Shrewsbury Hospital and Blackheath Lane Centres of Excellence) simultaneously. The module is shared between Adult and Mental Health nursing students. The size of the groups per module launch can range from 35 to 70 students per group. The module assessment requirements students to create a portfolio of relevant evidence to support five learning outcomes with an older persons focus, the work is presented via a Viva Voce examination.

PBL is used as part of a formative assessment to assist students to develop their skills in a variety of ways. These include team-working, searching and evaluating information, decision-making and formulating a presentation to the entire cohort on the presentation day. Interestingly, one group recruited their own grandparents to play the main character roles.

The purpose of the PBL is to encourage students to explore a range of materials and information about a specific case, which should reflect, holistic patient care, assessment and possible interventions. The use of Peter Thursby’s ‘Listen to Me’ video creates a ‘real’ person scenario for students to focus on their attention and develop lifelong learning skills in a real team work context (Clouston et al 2010).

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The evaluation was incorporated in the overall end of module evaluation process. The evaluation is a feedback form, anonymized with the exception of identifying whether the student is on the ‘Adult’ or ‘Mental Health’ nursing programme, asking them to highlight three things that went well and three things that could be done differently. This was used before the University evaluation of Evally’s module evaluation. Examples of comments from students have included: • I enjoyed the build up to the presentations, using the PBL groups to understand how competent others of the group were in the understanding of elderly care. • PBL work: some people put more effort in then others, it was unfair • PBL group work - new challenge working together with adult students. It was good to get to know other students and have varied input of experience and interests

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To determine a detailed examination of the use of PBL within the module a structured evaluation would be of benefit, going beyond the Evally’s questionnaire. Evaluation methodology would be used to capture feedback via a questionnaire from students at the end of the academic Year 2, when the module has been completed. Questions would include key themes related to the following areas:

• PBL, introduction (loop) to group work, and how their group developed and was managed.

• What TEL was utilized during the period of the PBL, including accessing VLE, resource pack and video.

• What learning was derived from the entire process, including collaborative working, leadership, application of theory to practice and use of TEL.

• The relationship between this type of learning and correlation to the Staffordshire University Graduate Attributes.

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EVALUATION & FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

The PBL evaluation is incorporated in the overall end of module evaluation process. The evaluation is a feedback form, anonymized with the exception of identifying whether the student is on the ‘Adult’ or ‘Mental Health’ nursing programme, asking them to highlight three things that went well and three things that could be done differently. This was used before the University evaluation of Evally’s module evaluation. Examples of comments from students have included:

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REFERENCES


Nursing and Midwifery Council (2010) Standards for Pre-Registration Nurse Education, London, NMC


FURTHER INFORMATION

Christine Cartwright - Senior Lecturer (Mental Health)
Christine.Cartwright@staffs.ac.uk
Tel: 01785 335369