

Addressing the Perioperative Succession Crisis: How a Perioperative Nursing Elective Contributes to Recruitment and Retention

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Problem: Perioperative nurses provide care for large numbers of patients in preoperative, intraoperative, and postoperative settings, yet the shortage of these specialized nurses – predominantly due to aging demographics and attrition – is increasing.

Purpose: Describe factors associated with academic programming on perioperative nursing career choices following graduation.

Significance: The significance of identifying the factors associated with education, recruitment, and retention is vital to the sustainability of this specialty practice.



BACKGROUND

- A coordinated recruitment and retention plan focused on succession planning is key to decreasing the shortage in perioperative nursing.
- One strategy to enhance recruitment into the field is forming academic practice partnerships (APPs), which can facilitate the integration of perioperative undergraduate curricula and expand the use of perioperative settings for clinical learning.
- APPs are essential because researchers have found that pre-licensure exposure to perioperative nursing influences whether new nurses choose the perioperative field upon graduation.
- Schlossberg's Transition Theory (Goodman et al., 2006) guided the study:
 1. *Situation* (what is happening?)
 2. *Self* (to whom is it happening?)
 3. *Support* (what help is available?)
 4. *Strategies* (how does one cope?)
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METHODS

- Descriptive survey research design: participants were a purposive sample of students who completed a perioperative undergraduate elective and graduated between 2017 and 2021 (N = 207).
- The four-part survey was open from May-June 2021 and delivered via the Internet per the Qualtrics® platform:
 1. Modified "Specialty Career Choices: Does Taking a Perioperative Nursing Elective Matter?" Questionnaire by Schmidt and Brown (2019).
 2. Anticipated Turnover Scale (ATS) developed by Hinshaw et al. (1985).
 3. Demographic data.
 4. Two open-ended questions: a) would you consider holding a position in perioperative nursing in the future? Why or why not? and b) is there any information you would like to share that is not covered in this survey?
- SPSS Statistics® were used to analyze descriptive data and open-ended responses were analyzed using MAXQDA® software.
- Sixty-five completed the survey, resulting in a response rate of 31% (65/207).

RESULTS

- Of the 65 respondents, 15 had a perioperative capstone placement, 24 were currently working in a perioperative setting, and more than half would consider a future perioperative position.

Response	Capstone Placement	Currently Work in the Perioperative Setting	Would Consider Holding a Position in Perioperative Nursing in the Future
Yes	15 (23.1%)	24 (36.9%)	38 (58.5%)
No	38 (58.5%)	41 (63.1%)	18 (27.7%)
Total	53	65	56
Missing	12 (18.5%)	0	9 (13.8%)

- Most were between 25-34 years old (62%), female (79%), and white (71%).
- Respondents who had a capstone experience in the perioperative field and were currently working in a perioperative setting had the lowest ATS mean score.

Group	n(%)	Mean	Std. Deviation
Capstone Placement; Work in the Perioperative Setting	7 (10.8)	2.7619	1.54817
Capstone Placement; Do Not Work in the Perioperative Setting	8 (12.3)	3.3437	1.39047
No Capstone Placement; Work in the Perioperative Setting	10 (15.4)	3.0667	1.02650
No Capstone Placement; Do Not Work in the Perioperative Setting	28 (43.1)	3.9107	1.48482
Total	53*	3.5142	1.43797

* Missing 12 responses to the capstone question.

- Of the four variables in Schlossberg's Transition Theory (Goodman et al., 2006), participants provided comments most aligned with "situation."

CONCLUSION

- Incorporating a perioperative elective course into nursing school curricula positively impacts the decreased pipeline for nurses entering the field.
- Furthermore, providing a perioperative capstone experience after taking a perioperative nursing elective may decrease anticipated turnover post-graduation.

REFERENCES*

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*A complete reference list is available upon request.