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Practice example

Linking census data and public health needs to inform community nurse practice

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Abstract

This abstract addresses the theme ‘Assessment that engages students in learning relevant to the disciplinary, professional and community contexts’ through a practice example. The assessment presented is linked to the community health nursing unit in the Bachelor of Nursing Advanced Standing, and Master of Nursing courses at Sydney Nursing School. A part of community health nursing is prevention of disease, where possible, and this requires a public health approach and a thorough understanding of the ‘make-up’ of the area in which a community nurse works. Building a community profile gives nurses this information. Students undertake a community profile as a part of the unit, partly by utilizing the 2011 census (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011). The data underpins two assessments: firstly, a group presentation which focuses on assessing a selected local government area and presenting this profile, and secondly an individual paper which discusses a public health problem which students choose from a prescribed list and link to the local government area. In line with Meizrow’s (2000) theory of transformative learning, this assessment actively encourages students to think about the unit content and contexts in which it is relevant, in this case, community health nursing. This is an important aspect of assessment in a profession centred degree and will have resonance with other faculties who are profession focused. In addition, there is constructive alignment between the teaching and learning activities which actively allows learners to construct meaning which is relevant to nursing practice (Biggs & Tang, 2007). Audience participation is planned. A list of disease risk factors will be given along with selected census information from a local government area. Participants will make links between the two, exploring the factors which a community nurse must be cognisant of in relation to preventing ill health. Verbal feedback from participants will follow.

References


Theme

Assessment that engages students in learning that is relevant to the disciplinary, professional and community contexts (theme 1)