

ABSTRACT

DISSERTATION/THESIS/RESEARCH PAPER/CREATIVE PROJECT: A Learning Needs

Assessment of Parish Nurses

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Parish Nursing is relatively new, having its original Scope and Standards from the American Nurses Association published in 1998. At the same time the Basic Preparation Curriculum for Parish Nursing, which had been developed through the International Parish Nurse Resource Center, was distributed to Educational Partners of the Center and used for Parish Nurse instruction. This curriculum has subsequently been revised in 2004 and 2009, but over this time a study of the learning needs of novice Parish Nurses has not been documented. This study is an assessment of the learning needs of one group of Parish Nurses. The study was constructed on 11 prioritized Parish Nursing skills from the "Getting Started" module of the Basic Preparation Curriculum for Parish Nursing and consisted of three questions about each skill. Survey respondents were asked to rank 1) the importance of the skill, 2) the percentage of new Parish Nurses whom they felt were deficient in the skill and 3) how important it was to add more training for that skill in the Parish Nurse course. Answers to the skill questions utilized a six point Likert scale.

Among other biographical information, respondents were asked how many years they had been an active Parish Nurse and to rank themselves based on Benner's (1984) levels of expertise. Although the outcomes of the study are focused on the learning needs of novice Parish Nurses, input was obtained from Parish Nurses of all levels of expertise.

A qualitative component was obtained from the textbox at the end of each set of the three skill questions. The comments gave voice to the respondents and enriched the findings.

The study affirmed that the skill of 'Keeping Confidentiality' was unanimously rated highly and well done, but this is an essential skill to all nursing. The most variance came with the skill of 'Making a Budget'. Many Parish Nurses volunteer their services to their church, often with a 'zero' budget to work with, so making a budget is immaterial. The study showed that respondents in general were satisfied with their Parish Nursing training and that of their novice colleagues.