

Sample DNP Project Essay

Name

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Healthcare in recent years has been under scrutiny in regards to providing quality care. The federal government has stepped in to improve the quality of care by implementing initiatives, which are attached to federal reimbursement. The doctor of nursing practice (DNP) degree was proposed to close the gap in quality currently experienced in the clinical settings (Moran, Burson, & Conrad, 2017). The DNP prepared nurse possesses the knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KSAs) and has the ability to apply to the complex health care issues currently faced in the health care system. The goal is to utilize these skills to improve nursing practice to achieve positive patient outcomes, organizational standards, and promote the nursing profession.

Nurse Leader Role

The Touro University Nevada (TUN) DNP program focuses on developing the students' competencies to practice as nurse leaders in various healthcare settings (Touro University Nevada, n.d.). Successful completion of this program will result in more opportunities for growth within the nursing profession. The TUN DNP program will refine needed skills to enhance current personal practices and promote the application of current evidence to support changes in practices within the clinical setting to improve outcomes. The role of the DNP prepared nurse is to lead other nurses, collaborate with interdisciplinary teams, and to translate current evidence into practice. To fully practice as a DNP prepared nurse leader, a commitment to life-long learning is required to keep abreast of the ever changing evidence that should guide practice.

Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes

The knowledge, skills, and attitudes currently possessed by this writer consists of respect for others, being culturally competent in practice, promoting life-long learning in others as well as demonstrating this through pursuit of advanced education. This writer has obtained certifications in gerontology, wound care, and has utilized the knowledge gained to change current practices within the clinical setting. Participation in leadership activities such as working with committees to change and/or update policies to ensure current practice is supported by evidence.

Leading others can be defined by inspiring others in attainment of common goals (Huber, 2018). This was demonstrated by reducing hospital acquired pressure ulcer (HAPU) rates within an acute care setting from 20% to zero. This achievement required inspiring others to believe this goal was important and harming the patients was unacceptable. Following that achievement, implementation of evidence-based preventive measures and program development was required. Continuous program evaluation followed, learning from others led to adjustments, collaboration of techniques, and eventually a successful program. Nursing is a very important component in the delivery of quality health care and requires the collaboration of the interdisciplinary team in order to achieve systemic quality improvement.

Scholarly Project

The culmination of the DNP program consists of designing and implementing a DNP scholarly project (Conrad & Kesten, 2017). The topic should be one that I have some basic knowledge, something that is supported by a lot of evidence, and can be attainable in the time period within this program. Since the TUN DNP program focuses on leadership, the project should reflect quality improvement to improve systemic or organizational goals. Perhaps

focusing on quality initiatives would be a great place to begin. It would also be helpful to have a practice site arranged since there is a focus on systemic or organizational goals. According to the TUN website, there is a requirement to complete 1,000 practicum hours (Touro University Nevada, 2014). Therefore, I can predict the need for a preceptor or project mentor. Given this information obtained through my research of different programs some thought and preparation is required prior to applying to the TUN DNP program.

After talking with several people, securing a project site was achieved. Luckily, I was also able to secure a project mentor (a doctorate prepared nurse) to assist me. Learning what practice problems and initiatives that existed in the chosen practice setting was very helpful in choosing a topic that I believed could be successful.

The proposed topic for the scholarly project is to reduce the amount of opioid usage within an adult primary care outpatient clinic. Since this practice issue has become the focus of a national emergency, I believe gathering current evidence to support a change in practice would be significant. Succeeding in implementing practice change in this setting would have a positive impact on the national health care system and improve the quality of patient care on an individual level.

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