



Introduction

- A concept-based curriculum (CBC) is one that is formed around the concepts of nursing practice rather than around the medical model.
- Due to the oversaturation of information in today's nursing programs nationwide it is becoming a "major trend for the future of education" (Giddens, 2013, p. xiii).

Background

The Practical Nursing (PN) curriculum at NMU was initially developed many years ago. The program had been suspended and when reopened new faculty were hired. It was thought that this was the opportune time to make the change to a concept-based plan for the fall of 2015.

Best Practice

- An extensive literature review was done. Articles were found explaining CBC but limited information was available regarding implementation or use of the curriculum - and none directly involving PN curriculums.
- The best resource identified was the book by Giddens (2013) which was designed for an RN CBC.
- Programs throughout the nation that have instituted CBC are just at the point of having their first cohort of graduates. They believe curriculum outcomes are being met but so far have little data.
- Literature thus far reports anticipated outcomes including graduates feeling like they can critically think as well as gaining the knowledge and understanding of the concepts.
- NCLEX pass rates and on- the-job performance have not yet been measured.

Goal

To update and change the current LPN curriculum to a concept-based plan.

Approval at NMU

The possible change was introduced to the faculty and then brought to the school of nursing's undergraduate curriculum committee (UCC). The director of the school of nursing as well as the dean were in support of the proposed change. We investigated answers to potential questions from the faculty in order to facilitate buy-in. After these steps the proposed change went to the universities Committee on Undergraduate Programs (CUP) as well as the Michigan State Board of Nursing for approval. The UCC as well as CUP are responsible for looking at the specifics of the curriculum change and how it would affect the students as well as the university. State boards of nursing have the authority to determine responsibilities and scope of practice for LPN's as well as RN's and regulate the requirements as well as curricula approval (Spetz, Chapman, Dyer, & Grumbach, 2004).

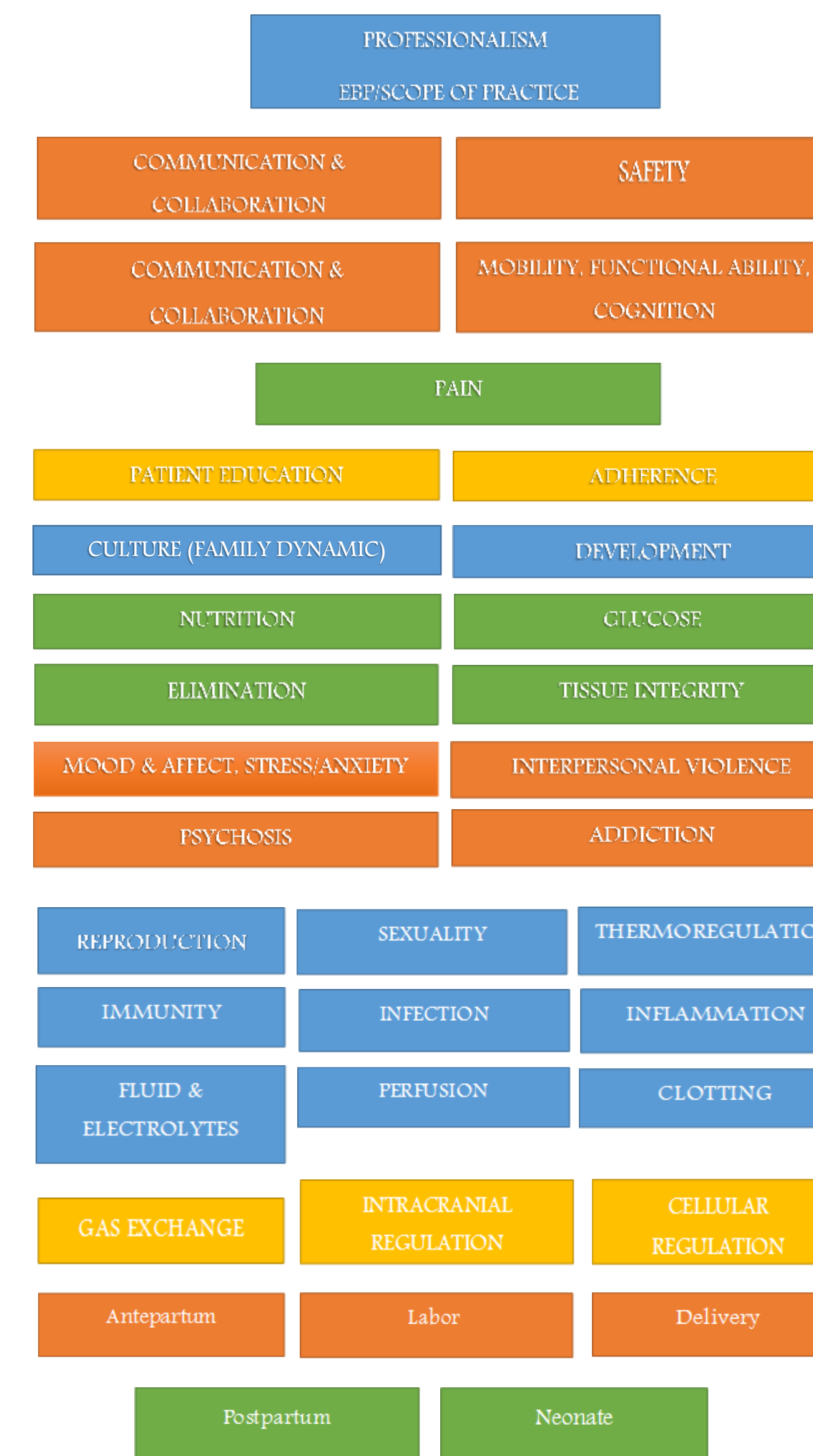
Risk / Benefit

Risks of implementing this program change would include the faculty's emotional and intellectual investment in the existing curriculum (Iwasiw, Goldenberg, & Andrusyszyn, 2009). Appealing to the faculty's logic of the problems we were facing as well as the values of graduating nurses who are competent and can critically think were a key.

The benefits considered were to improve student satisfaction in their learning experience as well as the benefit of a CBC creating critical thinkers who can connect concepts more readily and solve problems.

The cost was budget neutral.

New Curriculum Concepts



Exemplar

Teaching by concepts is intended to create critical thinkers who are able to analyze situations in the clinical setting and make decisions (Oneail, 2013). Examples of concepts, used in teaching, are called *exemplars*.

Exemplars for the concept *gas exchange* could include:

- COPD in the elderly woman
- Asthma in an athlete
- RSV in the neonate
- Pneumonia in a middle aged male
- Croup in a child

Acknowledgements/Contact

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Conclusion

- A CBC is a different way of organizing teaching, it often incorporates new innovative ways to do things in order to have students see and learn things that they might not be able to see in a clinical situation (Carlson, 2012).
- CBC decreases the over-saturation of information while increasing the students' ability to critically think (Giddens & Brady, 2007).
- This project of reorganization faced problems of faculty and student buy-in (since it is not done by any school in our area) and the extensive amount of work needed to be done in order to reorganize material.
- Use of a CBC is still fairly new and thus far it has not been used in PN programs.
- Nationwide, nursing curriculum is in need of a redesign in order to keep up to speed with the healthcare changes of today.

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