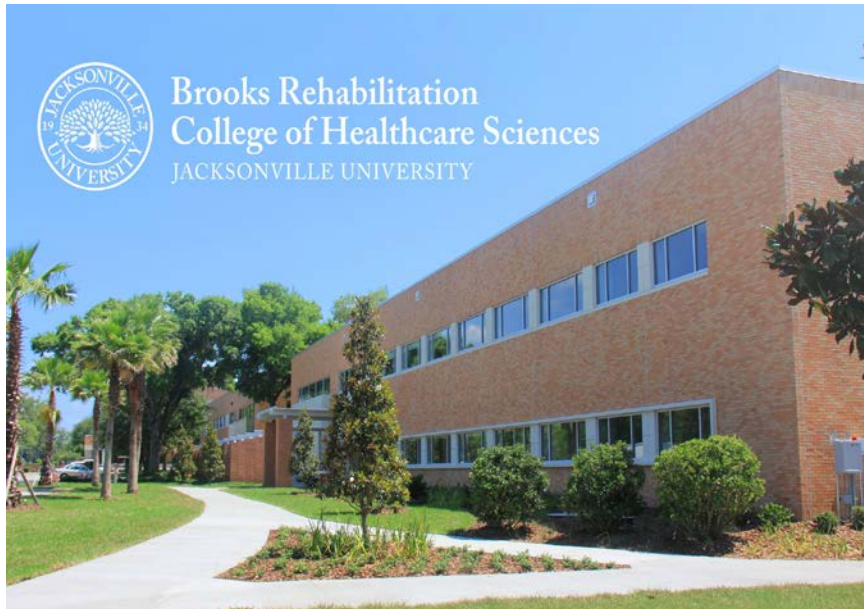




An Academic Based Nurse Practitioner Fellowship Program: A Pilot Project Designed to Ease Nurse Practitioner Transition to Practice



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Introduction

- Many new NP graduates feel unprepared to practice in their first NP role
- Relative lack of NP residency or transition programs offered
 - Few NP residencies offered by employers with limited capacity
 - No evidence of NP fellowships offered by academic settings
 - 87% of experienced NPs (N=562) indicated interest in residency had one been available (Hart & Macnee, 2007)



Significance of the Problem

- Nurse educators have an obligation to promote a successful transition for NP graduates
 - Difficult transition with little support available (Hart & Macnee, 2007)
 - Feelings of “disequilibrium...anxiety, insecurity, inadequacy, and uncertainty” may persist years after transition with the 1st year being most difficult (Kelly & Mathews, 2001, p. 161)



Literature Review

- Implications for Nurse Educators
 - Facilitate the transition for NP graduates
 - Introduce professional organizations and other support networks
 - Staying connected through Ces
 - Seminars on adjustment from expert to novice
 - Time management
 - Emphasis on gains in personal satisfaction

(Kelly & Mathews, 2001)



Literature Review

- Implications for Nurse Educators
 - Facilitate the transition for NP graduates
 - Promote learner-centered environment to foster role transition
 - Encourage coping mechanisms (personal support system and optimistic self-talk)
 - Include faculty support and guidance

(Steiner et al., 2008)



Literature Review

- Implications for Nurse Educators
 - Facilitate the transition for NP graduates
 - Adequate socialization to the NP role occurs during the educational program but not a complete transition
 - Phase II transition occurs 6 months - 2years post-graduation
 - Obstacles create turbulence for the new graduate
 - Turbulence can be mediated by positive forces such as positive support/encouragement from within the work setting and networking with colleagues outside of the work setting

(Heitz, L., Steiner, S., & Burman, M., 2004)



Theoretical Framework

- “From Limbo to Legitimacy” (Brown and Olshansky, 1997)
 - Laying the foundation
 - Launching
 - Meeting the challenge
 - Broadening the perspective
- 1st year post-graduation challenges
 - In “limbo” leaving behind the NP student persona and accepting new identity as “legitimate” NP



Theoretical Framework

- 6 months post-graduation is a period of “liminality” or limbo as they redefine self
 - Imposter phenomenon vs. transient identity confusion
 - “When people say nurse practitioner, I know that they are talking to me. Before, it was like they were talking about somebody else.” (Brown & Olshansky, 1997, p.48)



Theoretical Framework

- **Laying the Foundation**

- Recuperating from school
- Negotiating the bureaucracy
- Looking for a job
- Worrying

- **Launching**

- Feeling like an imposter
- Confronting anxiety
- Getting through the day
- Battling time

- **Meeting the Challenge**

- Increasing competence
- Gaining confidence
- Acknowledging system problems

- **Broadening the Perspective**

- Developing system savvy
- Affirming oneself
- Upping the ante



NP Fellowship

- Idea developed by 2 NP faculty
- Feedback from graduates about difficult transition to NP role
- Many disillusioned in first NP role
- Many leave first jobs early or leave profession altogether
- Recognized lack of fellowship/residency opportunities in NE FL locations



Fellowship Development

- Conducted needs survey to graduating class in January (graduation date April)
- Overwhelmingly positive support
- Applied for grants to assist with cost
- Developed program based on literature
- Identified and obtained instrument to use for research study
- Submitted proposal to university IRB for approval



Fellowship

- 4 sessions (1 per month) from June – September
- On campus location, after work, 6-8pm
- Provided information, resources, articles, booklets, CEUs
- Dinner provided at no cost to graduate NPs
- Asynchronous discussions on Facebook
 - Fellowship group established
- Encouraged NP alumni participation



Topics

- First Job
 - Prioritizing, interviewing, negotiation, time commitment, scheduling
- Getting Started
 - Privileging, protocols, scope of practice, role identification
- Showing Your Value
 - Managing outcomes, billing, patient challenges
- Giving Back
 - Networking, mentoring, precepting, career advancement, teaching, research, collaboration



Research Study

- What is the effect of an academic based nurse practitioner fellowship program on newly graduated novice nurse practitioners ease of transition to NP practice?



Instrument

- Nurse Practitioner Role Transition Scale
- 18 item questionnaire
- 5-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree)
- Higher total score= perception of an easier role transition experience
- 3 domains:
 - Role Confidence, Comfort and Competence
 - Collegial Relationships
 - Understanding of Role by Clients



Research Design

- Pretest-posttest quasi experimental design
- Survey given to all April 2015 NP graduates prior to start of Fellowship program
- Given again at conclusion of Fellowship program



Data Analysis

- Examine the difference between pretest and posttest
- Examine difference between comparison and experimental posttest
- Independent groups t-test and Paired t-test used



Fellowship Results

- Very helpful, comforting
- Not feeling “alone in challenge”
- Not feeling isolated
- Emotional support
- “Built my confidence and empowered me”
- Want more sessions!
- Start earlier (pre certification exam prep)
- Timing of topics
- Fellowship rated Excellent on all evaluations



Study Results

- Cohort=25 NP graduates
- 11 completed survey pre fellowship
- 21 completed survey post fellowship
 - 6 did not attend any sessions
 - 6 attended all 4 sessions
 - 9 attended 1-3 sessions
- As small numbers subjects divided into those attending 0 sessions (6) vs those attending varying number of sessions (14)



Demographics

- N=25
- 70% 31-40 years
- 60% with 6-10 years nursing experience
- Most of rest in 41-50 year age range and 11-20 years experience



Study Results

- Examine the difference between pretest and posttest
 - Mean score 57.2 (pretest) vs 70.6 (posttest)
- Examine difference between comparison and experimental posttest
 - Mean score 65.8 (did not attend) vs 75.5 (attended)



Statistical Analysis

- Independent t-test $p = .681$
- Unable to run paired t test due to researcher error
- Findings between groups not significant



Limitations

- Small sample size
- Grouped all who attended any session of fellowship into one category
- Short time interval after fellowship to retake survey
- Subjects familiarity with researchers
- Did not include clinical case studies
- Subjects at different levels of NP transition
 - At conclusion of fellowship, some still looking for first NP job, others just starting NP positions and still others already working for 2-3 months as NP
- Researchers lack of familiarity with Facebook
- Only 1 NP alumni attended (DNP student)



Conclusions

- Fellowship needed and wanted by NP graduates
- Future fellowships to include more clinical components
- Develop Facebook to communicate between sessions and after fellowship completed
- Encourage NP alumni to participate



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Thank you!



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