

Patient Notification of Diagnostic Test Results: An Interprofessional Simulated Activity

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Introduction and Purpose

- Nurse practitioners frequently need to call patients to discuss diagnostic test results to determine safe and effective plans of care.
- Nurse practitioner students do not frequently have an opportunity to notify patients of test results via telephone in the clinical setting which leaves the student ill-prepared for this aspect of practice.
- The nurse practitioner needs to be able to communicate effectively with the interprofessional team in order to provide safe and optimal care.
- Nurse practitioners need to be able to collaborate with pharmacists as they are an important member of the health care team and experts in the field of pharmaceuticals.

Collaboration with Pharmacy

- Collaboration with faculty from the College of Pharmacy determined common reasons pharmacists call providers regarding lab results.
- College of Pharmacy Faculty and College of Nursing Faculty each contributed to patient scenarios utilizing information pertinent to their professions.
- Pharmacy faculty provided feedback on interprofessional communication and the nursing faculty provided information on the patient communication.

Gaps Between Education and Practice

- Students need to be able to discuss a plan of care clearly and effectively with a patient via telecommunication
- The nurse practitioner needs to be ready to answer questions from the patient in real time which students may not have an opportunity to experience in clinical.
- Students also need to know how to work within the interprofessional team to enhance patient health outcomes.
- Students may not have the ability to notify patients of lab results and discuss a plan of care that needs to occur or change as a result of the diagnostic tests in the practicum setting.

Student Feedback

- Nurse practitioner students felt more prepared and confident discussing lab tests and results with patients in real time.
- Nurse Practitioner students appreciated the knowledge of the pharmacy students in the calculation of renal dosing and polypharmacy.
- Both sets of students acknowledged challenges in communication when the plans of care differed.
- Pharmacy students did not realize the amount of information nurse practitioner students knew about medications.

Approach

- Nurse practitioner faculty identified common tests that are ordered in the clinic, but may not be available by the end of the patient visit.
- The nurse practitioner student was emailed a patient visit scenario which included an unresulted diagnostic test.
- Pharmacy faculty provided the lab results to the pharmacy student.
- The pharmacy student initiated a phone call to the nurse practitioner student to discuss the diagnostic results
- The nurse practitioner student called the patient, simulated by nursing faculty, and relayed the test results, plan of care, and answered patient questions.

