Adding Transition Planning for Youth with Special Health Care Needs to the APRN Curriculum

The term “transition” is used in pediatric health care to define the pathway to adulthood. This time in adolescence poses many challenges for teens and families, but is particularly challenging for youth with special health care needs (YSHCN). In 2016, the National Survey of Children’s Health presented data on transition planning for youth with and without special health care needs. The researchers reported that nationally only 17% of youth with special health care needs and 14% of those without special health care needs met the overall performance measures of the Maternal Child Health Bureau (MCH) on transition planning.

According to the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties’ Population-Focused Nurse Practitioner Competencies (2013), content on collaboration in planning for transition to adulthood should be contained within the curriculum for all specialties involving adolescents. While evaluating our graduate level courses, we identified a knowledge gap pertaining to the transition planning of YSHCN to adult health care services. The aim of this poster is to raise awareness and provide education to NP faculties, NP students and practicing NPs about the need for transition planning for YSHCN.

The training module was developed by PNP faculty who participated as trainees in their university’s LEND program with the objective that students would use this new knowledge of transition planning for YSHCN in their future practice. LEND is a year-long, graduate level interdisciplinary training program; Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (LEND). The LEND program goal is to improve the health of infants, children and adolescents with disabilities. There are 52 LEND programs in 44 US states, forming a network that shares information and resources to maximize their impact.

Using the MCH leadership competencies as the framework for this innovative training module, learners will gain advanced knowledge to improve health care delivery systems for YSHCN and their families. To be effective when caring for YSHCN, the NP needs to be trained in three roles, provider, collaborator and advocate. The provider role is the direct care component including primary care needs, nutrition and sexuality. The collaborator role promotes the interprofessional relationships within the community including higher education, transportation, and employment. As an advocate, the NP has knowledge of resources and can affect change in local, state and federal level policy regarding individuals with disabilities. Case studies, discussion and readings are utilized to foster their learning.

Question: What benefits do you see in participating in a training module on transitioning youth with special health care needs for your practice?

Kathleen Kent, DNP, APRN, CPNP
Clinical Assistant Professor
Coordinator, Pediatric Nurse Practitioner Program
Indiana University School of Nursing
Indianapolis, Indiana
Health care transition (HCT) is purposeful, planned movement of youth with and without special health care needs (SHCN) from child-centered to adult-centered care. Barriers to providing HCT for primary care providers (PCP) include time, reimbursement and inadequate training. Without HCT support, data shows health is diminished, quality of care compromised, and health care costs are increased. The 2016 National Survey of Children’s Health indicated that 40% fewer youth with SHCN are meeting transition goals compared to data from 2009-10. This is particularly apparent in youth with autism who are half as likely to receive HCT services.

WHAT IS LEND?

In 1963, university-based centers caring for people with developmental disabilities formed a network, the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD). Within this network, Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (LEND) programs train graduate interdisciplinary students to improve the health of children with neurodevelopmental disabilities (NDD) using the Maternal Child Health (MCH) leadership competencies.

BACKGROUND

Through participation in the LEND program as trainees, a competency deficiency related to HCT for youth with SHCN was identified in the advanced practice registered (APRN) curriculum. The APRN has the advanced skills in assessment, management, and evaluation for high level coordination of care for youth with SHCN. This care coordination is a national priority of Institute of Medicine, and the Affordable Care Act recommends including a nurse care coordinator on health teams. To reduce the barrier of inadequate training, the purpose of this project is to create a learning module on HCT for youth with SHCN that will be implemented across the APRN curriculum. By educating and preparing APRNs in the role of provider, collaborator, and advocate for youth with SHCN, it is an opportunity to improve outcomes of the transition process. The learning module will be structured around the 5 key areas of transition with a greater focus on the HCT aspect using the 6 core elements as identified from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP).

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PURPOSE

This HCT learning module will be integrated into the curricula of the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) primary care pediatric, family and adult-gerontology nurse practitioner tracks and the adult and pediatric clinical nurse specialist (CNS) tracks. It will also be integrated into the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) curriculum track.

After completion of the HCT, the learner will be able to:
- Describe the health care transition (HCT) plan for youth with SHCN
- Demonstrate the APRN roles of provider, collaborator, and advocate in the primary care setting
- Incorporate the AAP disease-specific guidelines for youth with SHCN into the HCT plan
- Implement evidence-based HCT services for youth with SHCN, gain access to resources, incorporate knowledge of systems and perform therapeutic interpersonal skills
- Formulate a HCT plan encompassing the 6 core elements of transition for youth with SHCN using the recommended timeline

RESOURCES

During this learning module, the following resources will be used to meet the objectives.
- Got Transition found at gottransition.org
- National Center on Secondary Education and Transition found at youthhood.org

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS & REFERENCES

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For a complete list of references, please use this QR code: