Meeting the needs of the novice to expert clinician: An innovative approach to ongoing education for the advanced practice nurse.
Kristin Drexel, MSN, RN, CRNP, PPCNP-BC, CCRN, PHRN, C-NPT
Allison Thompson, MSN, RD, RN, CRNP, PACNP-BC, CCRN

Background:
Advanced Practice Nurses (APNs) are challenged with finding cost-effective, easily accessible pediatric acute care focused opportunities for ongoing professional education and maintenance of clinical skills. The breadth of experience levels leads to diverse educational needs even within a specific practice area. With our rapidly growing group of APNs in the pediatric critical care setting, we sought to provide ongoing educational opportunities eligible for continuing education credit hours and designed to meet the diverse experience levels as well as certification and credentialing requirements.

Details of Innovation:
The Pediatric Critical Care Nurse Practitioners at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) created an innovative educational curriculum to provide ongoing education in a variety of formats to meet the various skills mixes of our group. This education is in the forum of weekly joint remote Pediatric Critical Care didactic sessions with PICU APNs from other Children’s Hospitals across the country; monthly local Pediatric Critical Care didactic sessions for the CHOP APN group; quarterly hands-on skills days to practice low volume, high risk skills; quarterly simulation sessions; and online learning modules for reinforcement of bedside ultrasound as well as harm prevention principles.

Outcome:
The successful implementation of a joint weekly remote education session with other PICU APNs across the country has increased free access to ongoing education opportunities for required pharmacology and trauma continuing education hours. Participation in monthly local pediatric critical care didactic sessions has increased by providing a user-friendly remote access platform to view the presentation in real-time. These sessions are also recorded for future viewing and continuing education credit via the hospital’s on-line electronic learning application. Each Critical Care APN also attends a minimum of one hands-on skills day in accordance with their skills level (either intermediate or advanced) increasing exposure to low volume, high risk skills which also offers both trauma and continuing education hours. In addition, each APN completes a minimum of 5 natural airway sedation simulations per 2 years as required for maintenance of hospital credentialing.

Implications:
Our innovative and easily accessible ongoing education model has increased the cost-effective availability of Pediatric Acute Care-specific opportunities for educational advancement. Providing remote access to education as well as continuing education credit hours significantly improved attendance and participation. Separating the skills day into intermediate and advanced provides a framework for experienced APNs to mentor novice APNs and cater to the educational needs of both groups. The identified need for ongoing education opportunities exists beyond the walls of the institution such that partnering with outside APNs from like practice areas increases access to didactic content. Offering a variety of educational forums (didactic, hands on skills stations, simulations, and online learning modules) also caters to the diverse learning styles of the clinician. Annual needs assessments identify topics of interest as well as areas of knowledge deficit guides future ongoing professional education for our APNs. This dynamic ongoing educational program also meets the requirements for maintaining board certification, state licensure, as well as hospital credentialing.

Open ended question:
What is the method for organizing and communicating the ongoing education to APNs internal and external to the organization as well as recording attendance and continuing education credit hours?
Meeting the Needs of the Novice to Expert Clinician: An Innovative Approach to Ongoing Education for the Advanced Practice Nurse

Kristin Drexel MSN, CRNP, PPCNP-BC, CCRN and Allison Thompson MSN, CRNP, PACNP-BC, CCRN
Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia

BACKGROUND

• Advanced Practice Nurses (APNs) require ongoing education for licensure and board certification.
• Challenges locating cost-effective, easily accessible, and pediatric acute care focused continuing education opportunities.
• Beginner to expert level APNs have diverse educational needs.
• 46% of APNs with ≤ 5 years experience
• Desired innovative education that caters to various adult learning styles

METHODS

1. Annual needs assessment to guide desired education
2. Didactic content remote or in person
   • PowerPoint, white board, round table discussions
   • Recorded for future online viewing for continuing education credit.
3. Interactive content in person
   • Simulation sessions highlighting natural airway moderate sedation scenarios as well as leadership and communication skills.
   • Skills sessions for the beginner and expert practitioner.
   • Intermediate- basic skills review by expert APNs followed by repeat demonstrations. 0-5 yr experience*
   • Advanced- theory, case studies, advanced concepts and troubleshooting techniques lead by PICU Fellows and Attendings. > 5yr experience*
   *consideration given to APN preference as well

OUTCOMES

• Remote and online recorded sessions increased access to required ongoing education.
• Offering state approved continuing education credit hours increased APN participation.
• Annual attendance at a hands on skills day tailored to experience level improved competency with low volume high risk skills.
• Simulations increased APNs completion of required natural airway sedations.

IMPLICATIONS

• Increased cost-effective access to Pediatric Acute Care continuing education.
• Accessibility improved attendance and participation.
• Framework for expert APNs to mentor novice APNs
• Variety of educational forums caters to adult learning styles.
• Evaluation of activities confirms learning and identifies needs
• Meets maintenance requirements for board certification, state licensure, hospital credentialing.

FUTURE APPLICATIONS

• Translate APN Education Program to other practice areas.
• Expand remote education opportunities to include additional Children’s Hospitals across the country.
• Adapt education content to meet the increased experience levels of the APNs.
• Utilize expert APNs in acute care areas to deliver education.
• Offer skills day to APNs in acute care areas outside critical care.
• Utilize simulation as an educational platform for additional critical care management opportunities.