



Lactation Curricular Content of Pediatric Nurse Practitioner Programs in the United States

Elaine D. Webber, DNP, PPCNP-BC, IBCLC ♦ Nadine Wodwaski DNP, MSN-ed, ACNS ♦ Deborah Busch DNP, CPNP, IBCLC

Background

- ❖ Current research identifies the importance of comprehensive lactation knowledge among HCPs to improve breastfeeding outcomes
- ❖ Educational curricula to incorporate lactation content is necessary for student preparedness to provide competent care
- ❖ Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (PNP) are in a unique position to support, promote, and manage BF from birth through weaning

Purpose and Aims

Survey Primary Care & Dual Track PNP programs in the US for their breastfeeding curricular content including clinical practice learning opportunities

1. Determine the quantity (hours) and content (topics) of didactic lactation education provided to PNP students
2. Identify the extent to which lactation education is included in clinical experiences
3. Determine whether simulation is utilized to teach clinical lactation skills

Methods

- ❖ A descriptive survey using an online LimeSurvey platform
- ❖ Response rate of 45%
- ❖ Data collection included:
 - Program descriptors
 - Number of hours of lactation content
 - Use of simulation
 - Clinical BF experiences offered

Results

Hours devoted to BF education throughout the curriculum	Percentages	Types of clinical experiences	Responses N = 17
At least 1 hour	6.25	Shadow a lactation specialist	10 (59%)
2 hours	12.5	Postpartum BF classes	2 (12%)
3-4 hours	43.7	WIC clinic	0 (0%)
5 or more hours	6.25	Breastfeeding support groups	2 (12%)
Did not/could not answer	31	Antepartum BF classes	2 (12%)
		Peripartum support groups (hospital or community sponsored)	1 (6%)
		Simulation	3 (18%)
		Others:	
		Contract with IBCLC® for standardized patient experience; Written case studies, Clinical settings,	8 (47%)

Educational topics covered

Educational topics covered	Percentages
BF management strategies	75
Early postpartum BF initiation	69
Promotion & management	69
Meds/Illness while BF	62
Biological aspects of breastmilk	56
Special populations and health conditions	56
Anatomy and physiology of lactation	53
Culture & breastfeeding	53
Attitudes & biases toward BF support	53
Not completed or not displayed	16

Narrative Responses

- Mixed feedback regarding adequacy of lactation content in programs
- Some programs stated breastfeeding content and clinical opportunities were insufficient for novice PNP students' entry into practice
- Many comments identified the need to improve didactic content and offer standard clinical experiences
- Survey opened respondents' eyes to the need for more lactation education in PNP programs
- Will consider simulation as a clinical opportunity to teach lactation skills

Discussion

- ❖ Lactation education significantly impacts BF knowledge
- ❖ Variability exists regarding BF content offered in PNP programs
- ❖ Significant variability in the hours devoted to breastfeeding education (from 1 to > 5 hours) and topics covered
- ❖ It is unclear how programs can cover content in 1-2 hours of didactic education.
- ❖ With no BF competencies, a student's clinical breastfeeding experience is potentially left to chance

Recommendations

- ❖ Various educational approaches exist to prepare healthcare professionals caring for BF dyads which could be utilized to increase and standardize BF education in PNP programs
- ❖ Since a hand-on approach to BF management skills is key, clinical opportunities are essential.
- ❖ Simulation can be utilized to build PNP's clinical competency
- ❖ Clinical variabilities could be addressed through standardizing clinical competencies and offering breastfeeding simulation experiences

Scan for References

