Volume and Utilization Patterns of Clinical Nursing Student Placements: A Retrospective Review of Data

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Nursing students need access to practicum experiences in real-life healthcare settings to consolidate knowledge, socialize into the professional role and acquire professional values.\textsuperscript{1,2} Although the quality of clinical experiences and the coordination of clinical placements have been explored in detail in the literature, there is a paucity of research regarding volume in different clinical settings (e.g., acute, residential, community, and mental health) or whether utilization of sites changes over time.\textsuperscript{1}

Nursing continues to rely on the traditional models of clinical supervision. Clinical supervision typically follows two models:

1) Group supervision: provides nursing students with the opportunity to evaluate, reflect and develop their own practice\textsuperscript{3} with the support of an on-site academic staff member in a supervised group (6 to 8 students).

2) Preceptorship: commonly occurs at the end of the students’ educational program, where students are placed with an experienced nurse on a 1:1 basis.\textsuperscript{4,5}
The Context

- There are 7 public and 1 private schools of nursing in the BC Lower Mainland (BCLM). Fraser Health Authority is the largest health authority in the BCLM with a total of 32 health care sites (e.g., hospital, community, public health).

- Each of these schools requires that students complete between 1200 and 2000 hours during two to four years of study.

- Data from the HSPnet database were extracted between academic years of 2005–2011 from 32 FHA sites for all nursing students (bachelor in nursing (BN), registered psychiatric nurse (RPN), bachelor of psychiatry in nursing (BPN) and licensed practical nurse (LPN)).
The Research Questions

This retrospective longitudinal study examines differences between preceptorship and group supervision across clinical sites within FH that provide clinical practicums to nursing students for the academic years of 2005–2011.

- From the nursing student requests for placement in FH, what are the differences among and between clinical settings (e.g., medical, surgical, mental health, maternal child etc…) in acceptance rates of preceptorship and group supervision?
- For the academic years of 2005–2011, how do acceptance rates of preceptorships and group supervision change over time and between clinical sites?
In 2010/11, the Fraser Health Authority hosted almost 2 million nursing student practice hours, a 64% increase from 2009/10.
Hospitals are the most common setting for clinical placements.
Group placements are the most common type of placements hosted and clinical learning units (CLUUnit) maintain consistently low utilization rates within practice settings.
Acceptance and Decline Rates By Program

Clinical Hours for Bachelor of Nursing Students

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CLUnit</td>
<td>6,912</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4,608</td>
<td>53,57</td>
<td>3,568</td>
<td>13,88</td>
<td>50,88</td>
<td>4,712</td>
<td>4,848</td>
<td>43,20</td>
<td>1,080</td>
<td>1,260</td>
<td>54,96</td>
<td>5,424</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prec</td>
<td>216.8</td>
<td>72.53</td>
<td>86.16</td>
<td>177.3</td>
<td>72.73</td>
<td>68.54</td>
<td>200.0</td>
<td>53.43</td>
<td>19.53</td>
<td>194.9</td>
<td>51.53</td>
<td>24.43</td>
<td>254.1</td>
<td>73.18</td>
<td>33.81</td>
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<td>Group</td>
<td>355.9</td>
<td>52.08</td>
<td>37.17</td>
<td>393.0</td>
<td>50.82</td>
<td>44.64</td>
<td>420.3</td>
<td>39.86</td>
<td>1,821</td>
<td>405.6</td>
<td>37.27</td>
<td>36.36</td>
<td>376.3</td>
<td>31.05</td>
<td>32.63</td>
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Psychiatric Nursing

Clinical Hours for Psychiatric Nursing Students

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<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>31.96</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>5.046</td>
<td>34.40</td>
<td>1.323</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>42.15</td>
<td>11.51</td>
<td>2.511</td>
<td>46.87</td>
<td>3.508</td>
<td>5.785</td>
<td>45.13</td>
<td>3.408</td>
<td>5.683</td>
<td>72.39</td>
<td>30.89</td>
<td>19.39</td>
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Licensed Practical Nursing

C. Clinical Hours for Licensed Practical Nurses

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<tr>
<td>Prec</td>
<td>20,366</td>
<td>23,864</td>
<td>9,172</td>
<td>33,042</td>
<td>38,222</td>
<td>40,292</td>
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<td>Group</td>
<td>88,124</td>
<td>43,817</td>
<td>25,204</td>
<td>129,46</td>
<td>10,983</td>
<td>34,480</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>700</td>
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<tr>
<td>Confirm/Decline</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>1,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancel</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>1,000</td>
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Legend:
- Prec: Precalculated Hours
- Group: Grouped Hours
- Confirm/Decline: Confirm/Decline Hours
- Cancel: Cancelled Hours
- Other: Other Hours
A large volume of clinical experiences/practice hours are utilized each year with consistent acceptance rates despite increasing enrollment.

**Declined hours**

↑ **BSN Preceptorships**: 19% in 2005/6 to **31%** in 2010/11

↑ **BSN Group**: 12% in 2005/6, dropped to 7% in 2009/10, but then increased to **13%** in 2010/11

↑ **RPN Preceptorships**: 3% in 2005/06 to **20%** in 2010/11

↑ **RPN Group**: 1% in 2005/06 to **25%** in 2010/11

↑ **LPN Preceptorship**: 45% in 2005/06 to **63%** in 2010/11

↑ **LPN Group**: 28% in 2005/06 to **46%** in 2010/11
Next Steps...

- Examining trends in requests between clinical sites (i.e., medicine, surgery, mental health, maternal child etc...)

**Recommendations:**
- New supervision models that include placements in diverse practice settings
- Advanced understanding of a learning environment that is beneficial to both staff and students
- Infrastructure to manage the large number of requests and effectively utilize all practice settings
- Future improvements to HSPnet
References


