Embedding “MOOC” principles in a small private online course as part of a new link nurse programme in infection prevention: an evaluation study

Higher Education Academy/NET Conference
Churchill College, Cambridge 6/9/2017
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Introduction to the Study Team

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Background – the Link Nurse role

- The Link Nurse model in clinical practice is well-established, for example in tissue viability (Tinley, 2000), diabetes care (Bull & Veall, 2009), and colorectal cancer nursing (Perry-Woodford & Whayman, 2005)

- Infection prevention is a global priority, linked to patient safety, the “cornerstone” of healthcare (National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence, 2012), therefore understanding what works is crucial

- The link nurse role can support infection prevention strategies by providing education for colleagues and the wider healthcare team (Royal College of Nursing, 2012)

- However, little evidence exists to show their exact impact on promoting best practice and clinical care (Williams et al, 2013).
The Study

- The main aim of the study was to implement and evaluate a link nurse programme.
- Staff and students from the School of Healthcare Sciences, Bangor University collaborated with the Infection Prevention team within the local Health Board to develop a programme for new link nurses in community hospital settings.
- The programme included support, education and regular contact with the infection prevention team, and, additionally, a bespoke small private online course (SPOC).
- The study was approved by Bangor University HMS Ethics Committee, and permissions to access sites by the relevant R&D department.
The SPOC

- We designed the course to promote the link nurse role in infection prevention
- CourseSites platform was used to host the course
- 10 learning units were developed to run weekly over 10 weeks
- Tools used included Panopto, Film clips, Quiz
- Weekly discussion boards provide opportunities for the link nurses to contact the course team directly, network, and reflect on practice in a supportive environment
- Linked to revalidation
- Certificate of achievement or academic credit option.
Learning units - content and aims

- Principles of Infection Prevention
- Getting Evidence into Practice
- Standards and Guidelines, Audit and Feedback
- Behaviour Change
- Behaviour change in Practice
- Understanding the work setting and managing challenges
- Using Leadership and Coaching skills
- What is change and how to manage it
- The Link Nurse – what’s in a name
- Bringing it all together
The “ideal” Link Nurse (according to our course participants)
Embedding MOOC principles

- MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) principles were embedded into the design and delivery of the course.

- 10 week timespan, credentialing and recognition, self-enrolment.

- Best practice in online teaching – monitoring course progress and create learning community (Miller, 2015).

- We ensured high levels of visibility in our “teacher” role throughout the course (Bayne & Ross, 2014).
Evaluation

- Course evaluation online
- Seven questions – themed around access, content, navigation, relevance for link nurse role
- Semi-structured telephone interviews using purposive sampling
- 11 completions of the SPOC to date.
Excerpts from the evaluation

- “I found the units very informative and I have learned a lot. I have a different view on all things Infection control related (in a good way)”
- “I liked that you could use discussion board at any time and add your points as not always free at allocated time due to shifts, commitments at that time”
- “I did use the discussion board and I think that it is a vital tool for the learner to utilise this as they can demonstrate understanding and benefit from the knowledge and experience of the tutors and other learners”
- “I hope to put what I have learned into practice and to be a good link nurse”
Conclusions and where next?

- The work contributes to understanding ways in which to promote education in clinical practice and practice development

- Our work contributes to the dialogue about e-learning and the pedagogy of SPOCs and MOOCs

- Transferable findings to a variety of settings, and recommendations about the design and delivery of future online education for healthcare professionals

- Programme of work and collaboration with our Health Board colleagues

- Using the SPOC to support staff development, knowledge and skill acquisition in infection prevention practice

- Changing Hearts and Minds - Infection Prevention MOOC.
Thank you for listening!
References

- Royal College of Nursing (RCN). (2012). *The role of the link nurse in infection prevention and control (IPC): developing a link nurse framework*. UK: RCN.