Tailored information skills programme for Trainee Nursing Associates

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Introduction

Trainee Nursing Associates (TNAs) are a new role which are designed to bridge the gap between healthcare support workers and registered nurses (Jones-Berry, 2019). TNAs embark on a two year programme which combines work and University level study as learners complete the first two years of nursing degrees which then makes them qualified to apply for band 4 Nursing Associate posts.

As TNAs are primarily based at BHNFT rather than University, the library recognised an opportunity to develop a tailored information skills programme to support their studies. Following meetings with BHNFT Nursing Student Support Leads and due to the fact their first assignment is on the critical appraisal of a journal article, a programme was decided upon which consisted of:

- Literature Searching, as 1 hour 1-1s or in pairs
- Critical Appraisal, 2 hour group session
- Referencing, 1 hour group session

During the first cohort of TNAs, group literature searching sessions were piloted, however feedback highlighted that learners would benefit more from 1-1 sessions. The session considered general principles of literature searching using HDAS and also focused on finding an article for the critical appraisal assignment.

TNAs first assignment involved the critical appraisal of a journal article using a CASP tool so the Library Lead tailored existing presentations to meet the level and needs of the assignment. After feedback from the pilot, TNAs were recommended to choose qualitative research, however they could critique quantitative if they prefered.

A referencing session was not offered for the first cohort, however due to learners asking for referencing support at different times during their first year of study, a group session was offered two weeks after the critical appraisal session.

Methodology

A simple self-administered survey was used to ascertain whether the teaching interventions had resulted in increased confidence for the three information skills aspects. TNAs were asked the following question anonymously before each of the teaching interventions:

On a scale of 1 to 5, how confident do you feel with this subject matter

TNAs were asked the same question after the session. Results were aggregated and are presented in the findings section. Free text comments were also asked and a simple content analysis was also performed. A mixed methods approach was deemed appropriate to develop a holistic understanding of the impact of the intervention.

References

Jones-Berry, S. (2019). How nursing associates will make their presence felt. *Nursing Standard, 34*, 3,8-10

Findings

For literature searching, the average rating of confidence before the session was 1.61 and following the session, the average rating of confidence was 3.27. For critical appraisal, the average rating for confidence was 1.33 and after the session it was 2.94. For referencing the average level of confidence was rated at 1.66 before the session and 3.6 after the session. This would suggest the positive impact of the teaching intervention.

In terms of the free text comments, anxiety emerged as a key theme, due to the fact the subject matter was new and due to the fact many TNAs had returned to education after a long time. While the free text comments implied also that they had found sessions useful, it also hinted that they would like further support from the library.

Conclusion

The evaluation suggested that TNAs benefitted from the teaching interventions. Consequently this will be offered to future cohorts. Next steps for this project involves looking at what other information skills sessions could be offered.