


50 Years of NP Education - It Is Time for A Journal

ESTABLISHING EDITORS

ince the first program for nurse practitioners opened in 1965 at the University of Colorado, NP education programs have been established nationally and internationally. The American Academy of Nurse Practitioners estimates that there are now over 140,000 NPs in practice today with 9,000 being educated each year (AANP, 2010). The Canadian Nursing Association reports there are now more than 3,000 NPs across their country (CAN, 2011). The numbers and need for well educated nurse practitioners grow around the world. Though the year 2015 will mark 50 years of nurse practitioner education there is not yet a journal specifically dedicated to curriculum development, teaching strategies assessment and evaluation of competencies, or use of traditional and emerging teaching modalities and the use of technology in nurse practitioner education.

The focus and scope of *The International Journal of Nurse Practitioner Educators* is to assist faculty from around the world as they transform nurse practitioner education. This peer-reviewed quarterly journal promotes excellence in national and international advanced practice education. The journal will publish broadly on topics related to nurse practitioner education. Articles of interest include but are not limited to curricular issues; simulation, technology, and innovation from the classroom to practice; clinical placements, and promoting clinical practice in academic settings. Journal articles and features present strategies

that support extraordinary nurse practitioner education worthy of the public trust.

In addition, current concerns of all nurse practitioner educators include implementation of the APRN Consensus Model (2008) and the impact that will have on preparing NP students for certification and practice. Healthcare reform with the need for nurse practitioners as primary providers has significantly increased interest in a career as a nurse practitioner and requires expansion of programs and establishment of nurse programs despite shrinking funding for higher education and shortages of both faculty and quality clinical education sites.

Coupled with these factors is the essential need for increased collaboration with other members of the healthcare team such as physicians, pharmacists, social workers, physical therapists as well as insurance companies, and government regulators. Additionally, the public is demanding that nurse practitioner programs demonstrate rigor and educationally sound methodology to ensure their confidence. Nurse practitioners have had an international presence in countries such as Canada for twenty years; yet, they still seek the advice and experience of nurse practitioners from other countries such as the United States to help them advance competencies. Likewise, nurse practitioners from the United States have much to learn regarding differences in problem based learning and simulation experiences where our Canadian educators have years of experience. Nurse practitioner communities in

Australia, New Zealand, and many countries in Africa are experiencing an enormous growth in NP education and desire collaboration with their international colleagues. A unique NP education journal offered online has the ability to reach educators everywhere.

Clinical nurse practitioner journals have readership, respect, and a positive impact on practice. In addition, general nursing and nursing education journals publish educational research and reports on educational innovations, policy, accreditation and issues; but, their focus is on undergraduate education. While many other health care disciplines have journals focused on the education of members of their professions, until this point there has not been a journal specifically for nurse practitioner educators. We aspire to correct that with *The International Journal of Nurse Practitioner Educators*.

The goal of the *International Journal of Nurse Practitioner Educators* is to meet the needs of NP educators. This journal will have the ability to devote several articles, an entire issue, or even a special edition to content on core and cutting edge content related to NP education. This focus could be on maintaining accreditation, preparing documents, resources, best practices in the use of technology, quality distant education, and evaluation of the multiple competencies needed by our graduates. By publishing in a fully on-line, open access peer reviewed journal which will have no subscription or publication fees, we hope positively to influence NP education into the future.

The International Journal of Nurse Practitioner Educators has been in development

for the past 12 months. A national survey of NP faculty members showed that the overwhelming majority of nurse practitioner educators are interested in the establishment of a unified journal for NP educational content. A group of nationally and internationally recognized and active faculty members were invited to form the core editorial board and develop an initial priority list of manuscripts and themed issues that would benefit nurse practitioner education. These include topics such as:

1) Community Preceptors: how do we engage them in teaching, how are they rewarded, how do we educate them as to how to educate and mentor our students, how do we assess whether their practice is congruent with "best practice"?

2) Optimal use of Observed Structured Clinical Exams (OSCEs) and other forms of standardized patients and simulation both to teach and evaluate core and specialty NP knowledge and competencies.

3) Meeting NP competencies as described by professional organizations such as National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties (NONPF), American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) the Canadian Nurses Association (CAN) and many other national and international NP and specialty advanced practice groups.

4) How might we share course resources such as syllabi, assignments, class activities?

5) How to best present content. What are the best practices for use of lecture, problem based learning, case study, simulation, on-line and face-to-face discussion? How can we move students forward to expert NP practice?

Authors and readers are the heart and soul of any journal. We invite you to read, learn, and contribute to the knowledge, open dialogue, problem solving, and shared wisdom we hope this journal will produce.

Establishing Editors in Alphabetical Order:
Carolyn Auerhahn, *Ellen Jones, Gary Laustsen, Laurie Kennedy-Malone, Carol Savrin, Eric Staples, and Diane Wink.*

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