Escaping the Traditional Classroom: The Use of an Escape Room in a New Graduate Nurse Residency Program

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Background
Aligned with the Institute of Medicine (IOM), a standardized Nurse Residency Program was implemented across a network of 13 acute care hospitals in 2016. All new graduate nurses were enrolled in the New Graduate Nurse Residency Program. Seminar sessions consisted primarily of lecture and case studies. Session and program evaluations indicated new graduate nurse residents desired a hands-on approach of relevant clinical topics.

An escape room was developed as a 60-minute component of a multi-station skills day.

Purpose
Using an interactive team-based approach, nurses gain an understanding of how policies and procedures are a resource to be utilized on the unit to guide practice.

Approach
790 new graduate nurses enrolled in the adult or pediatric New Graduate Nurse Residency Program spanning 13 acute care adult and pediatric hospitals.

Nurses rotate through ten mini stations, consisting of blood administration, catheter associated urinary-tract infection (CAUTI), central line, chest tube, Clinical Institute Withdrawal Assessment (CIWA), code blue/rapid response, fall prevention, intravenous compatibility, medication administration, restraints, and wound care.

Topics were selected from hospital initiatives, safety events, literature review, and feedback from nurse residents and Nursing Education and Professional Development staff.

A Likert evaluation scale was completed at the end of the session and allowed nurses to rate session objectives with an opportunity to free text comments.

Findings
Over 98% of the participants strongly agreed/agreed the escape room concept encouraged collaboration as a team and strengthened understanding of policies and procedures through practical applications.

Testimonials
- “I absolutely loved the escape room especially to build our critical thinking.”
- “I loved the escape room! Very different and engaging fun.”
- “We were able to learn in a new way and put our minds together to solve each puzzle.”
- “Great way to work as a team and think outside the box.”

References
Available upon request

Discussion
Content development utilizes best practices, policies & procedures and enhances analytical problem solving.

Encourages team work and socialization among new graduate nurses.

Interactive concept aligns with adult learning principals.

Fiscally conservative concept that could be replicated for various topics.

Potential limitations include scalability to large groups and monitoring policies and procedures to ensure updated content is reflected in each mini station.

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The creative approach can assist in content delivery in an alternative, non-traditional classroom format.

Implications for Practice
By creating an interactive learning environment new graduate nurses become engaged learners which enhances knowledge retention and application.

The creative approach can assist in content delivery in an alternative, non-traditional classroom format.

Findings
At the end of the session the learner can:

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<th>Percentage of Respondents who Strongly Agreed (5) or Agreed (4)</th>
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<td>Collaborate as a team to successfully complete individual stations within the escape room</td>
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<td>Utilize Advocate Document System (ADS) and interview process to solve clues</td>
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Overall Percentage per Session

Testimonials
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