



Resilience-Based Clinical Supervision

FoNS facilitated programme to support the health and well-being of learning disability and mental health student nurses: A summary

Background

Recognition of the importance of maintaining the well-being of nurses and student nurses is not new, but it has been brought more to the fore by the Covid-19 pandemic. Facing the new pressures of online learning and making the difficult decisions about paid placements has understandably had a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of the student population.

Resilience-based Clinical Supervision (RBCS) is, in brief, a form of clinical supervision which focuses on the emotional regulatory systems motivating a response to a work situation or difficulty. It includes elements of mindfulness-based exercises and reflective discussions with a view to enhancing well-being, resilience and improving patient care.

The FoNS facilitated RBCS programme for learning disability (LD) and mental health (MH) student nurses aimed to recruit 24 second and third year LD and MH student nurses from across the NHS England regions. The programme was designed to be delivered online, with an initial 5-hour masterclass and four follow-up small group sessions.

This programme was commissioned by Health Education England as part of their drive to support student nurses, to equip them with the skills to develop both personally and professionally and ultimately, to improve recruitment and retention of nursing staff.

The Programme

The total commitment from each participant was 14 hours, including pre-work, masterclass, reflection and evaluation. The five sessions were run over a period of 10 weeks in early 2021 via Zoom. The initial masterclass was evaluated by a survey. The whole programme was evaluated using a participatory evaluation approach where students themed their own responses to a survey.

Key Themes

Participants valued the opportunity to connect with others in a safe space where they could explore feeling and emotions 'you are never alone in what you are going through'

Participants gained confidence and self-awareness, they became more aware of the importance of psychological safety and challenging the inner critic 'How to manage uncomfortable situations and the ability to manage my emotions when I feel under pressure even if I don't feel calm and confident'

This RBCS programme is the first and only real safe space I feel that I have had to really explore difficulties as a student nurse - by reflecting in a group environment and with a facilitator to guide the process. The group support system has been invaluable and particularly when we have checked in/out with each other, knowing how everyone is or has been feeling to allow extra support if needed.

The key insight for me is just how important peer support and RBCS is. [Mindfulness] has been helpful to ground me and bring myself back to baseline when feeling stressed or anxious, even at times when I haven't realised I am feeling stressed. It also helps to make me feel more positive for the rest of the day.



In my opinion training to be a nurse can be a difficult and emotional journey. Clinical supervision can massively help with this, it can make the journey more manageable and certainly more pleasant. During the last session I did a full turn from beginning in the threat system, not seeing a way to achieve my dream career, to finishing in the drive system feeling like I was well on my way to becoming a qualified nurse.

Participants valued the opportunity to learn about the model and the emotional regulatory systems, and appreciated the insights it gave into behaviours; 'allow[ing] [them] to manage and deal with situations better' and 'healthier ways of coping with difficult situations'

One key insight is to focus on myself. If I feel well then I can perform better.

RBCS supports NMC competencies around continuing professional development, professional conduct and holistic practice

Implications

The students who took part in this programme had very limited experience of clinical supervision (as opposed to practice assessment supervision). Giving students an early exposure to clinical supervision will not only support them directly during their time as students but will also increase the likelihood of them accessing clinical supervision as clinical professionals

This NEEDS to be introduced to all university nursing programmes. I strongly believe, with this course in place, there would be less students dropping out of university and there would be a new generation of nurses equipped with the tools to spot not only their own struggles but also the struggles of fellow nurses.

Clinical supervision should become part of the undergraduate curriculum (both theory and practice) and be included in practice hours for students

You can access the full report at <https://www.fons.org/learning-zone/clinical-supervision-resources/testimonials>

