

Precepting Advanced Practice Providers

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Introduction

- ▶ Advanced practice providers (APPs) are fundamental to healthcare delivery in the US (Webb et al., 2015).
- ▶ A cornerstone to APP education is the opportunity to learn from an experienced preceptor within the clinical setting (Roberts et al., 2017).
 - 2013).
- ▶ Throughout the country, shortages of preceptors for APP students have been observed (Heusinkvelt & Tracy, 2020).
 - A workforce demand survey stated that 85% of nurse practitioner programs reported turning away qualified applicants due to a lack of available preceptors (McNeil & Konicki, 2021).

Problem Statement

- ▶ Limited data describing motivation or barriers to acting as a preceptor. (Webb et al., 2015).
- ▶ Within VUMC there is no formal education or resources available to APP preceptors.
 - Negative APP preceptorship experiences may result in poor retention.
- ▶ VUMC developed a Preceptorship Support Committee with the goal of identifying gaps in support and enhancing resources.
 - Survey was deployed to 1,300 APPs employed by VUMC.
 - Narrative responses required thematic analysis

Purpose and Objectives

► Purpose:

- Analyze data from Advanced Practice Provider Preceptor survey.
- Perform thematic analysis to evaluate incentives, barriers, and motivating factors to APP preceptorship within VUMC.

► Objectives:

- Analyze demographic data (Fall 2021).
- Conduct thematic analysis to identify common incentives, barriers, and motivating factors experienced by APPs who precept new employees and students (Summer 2021).
- Share findings from thematic analysis with stakeholders (September 2021).
- Disseminate APP survey results and provide recommendations to APP Leadership (Summer 2022).

Background

- ▶ Novice APPs experience many stressors during their role transition from student to licensed and certified provider (Murray & Buckley, 2017).
- ▶ Novice APPs endorse a desire for mentorship (Murray & Buckley, 2017).
- ▶ Rapid growth of APP profession
 - Increased need for qualified preceptors (Roberts et al., 2017)
- ▶ Preceptors are usually volunteers
- ▶ Goals of providing education and support for preceptors
 - Create open learning environments
 - Foster fulfilling preceptor/preceptee relationships
 - Prevent burnout and job dissatisfaction (Pitcher, 2017).

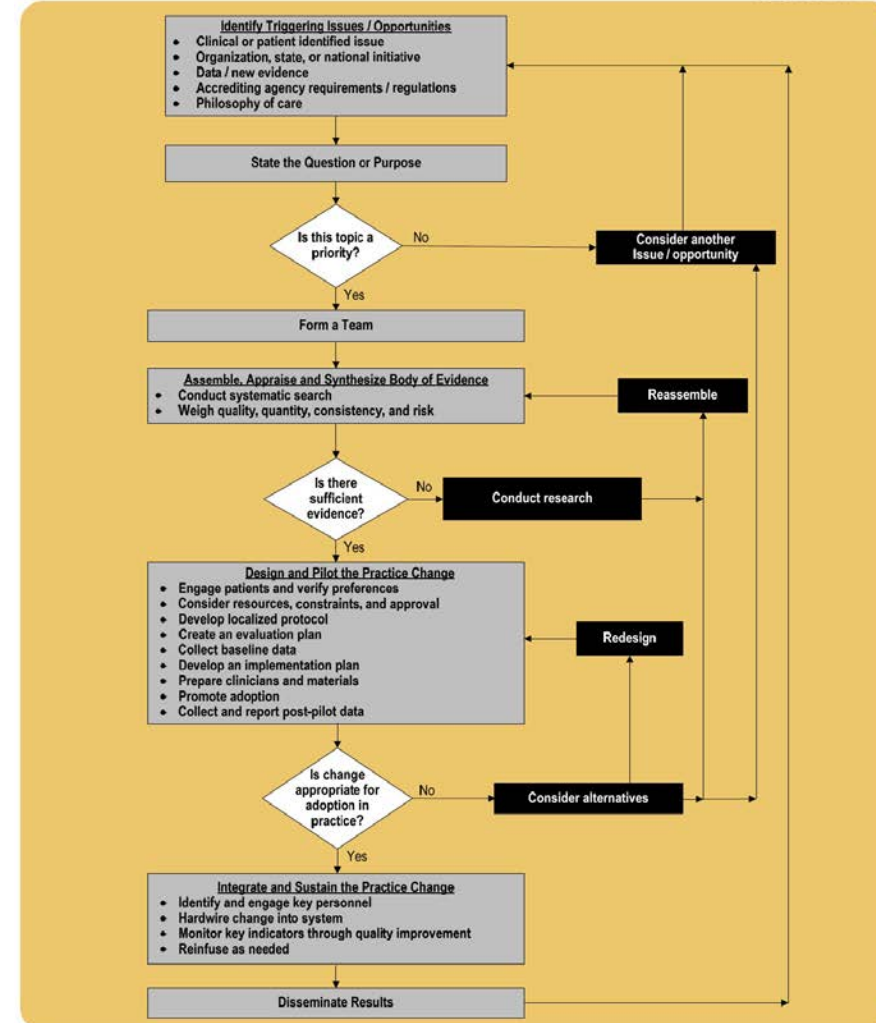
Concepts

- ▶ Preceptor
- ▶ APP (Advanced Practice Provider)
- ▶ Mentor
- ▶ Continuing Education
- ▶ Adult Learners

Framework

- ▶ Iowa Model of Evidence Based Practice
 - Guides the implementation of EBP (Iowa Model Collaborative [IMC], 2017).

The Iowa Model Revised: Evidence-Based Practice to Promote Excellence in Health Care



◆ = a decision point

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Synthesis of the Evidence: Evidence Search

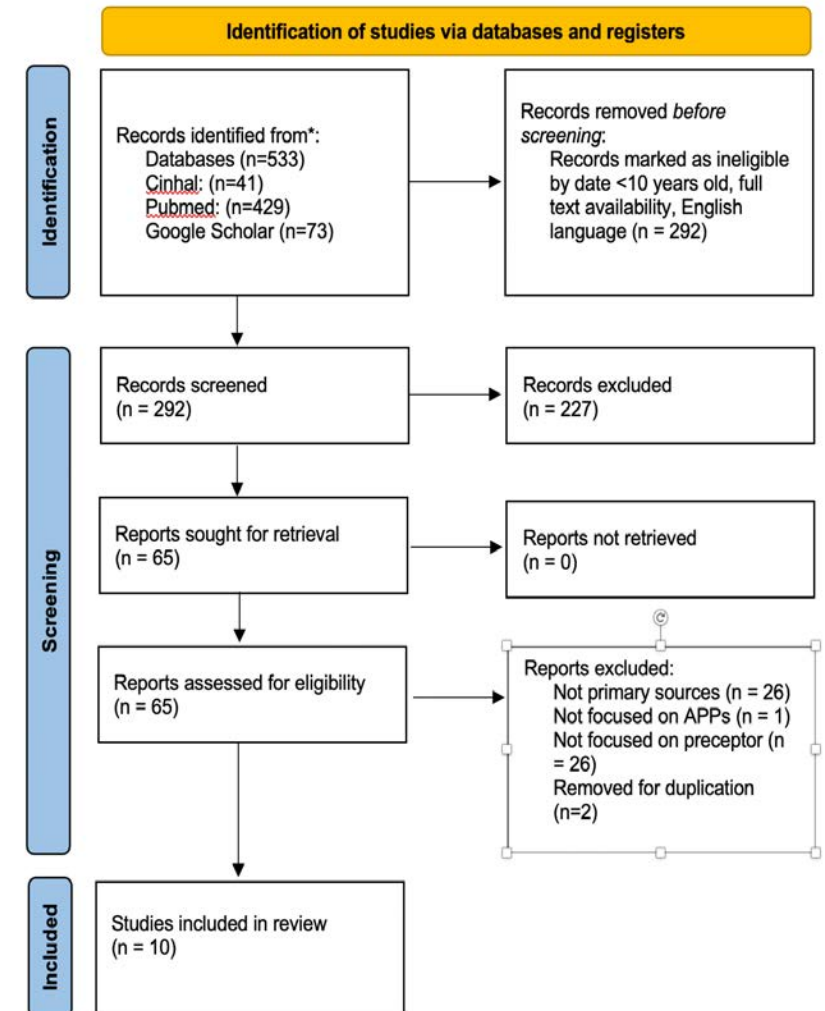
► PICOT Question

- “Among advanced practice providers, what are the factors associated with the development and enhancement of the preceptor role?”
- Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL), Google Scholar and PubMed
 - May 24, 2021 to June 21, 2021
- Assisted by Rachel Walden, MLIS
- Criteria for inclusion:
 - peer review, publication within the last 10 years, full-text availability, and English language.

Synthesis of the Evidence: Evidence Search

► Search Terms

- *advanced practice providers, preceptorship, preceptor, education, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, advanced practice nurse (APN).*
- Medical subject heading (MeSH) terms included: *advanced practice nursing, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, physician assistant, nurse specialists, nurse anesthetist, nurse midwife, internship, practicum, education, and preceptorship*
- 292 preliminary articles for review from all three databases.



Synthesis of the Evidence

- ▶ 10 articles
 - 5 cross-sectional descriptive surveys
 - 4 quality improvement projects
 - Pre and post-intervention surveys
 - 1 performed both a survey and quality improvement project
- ▶ Level VI evidence
 - Single descriptive or qualitative study, case studies, EBP implementation, QI projects (Melnyk & Fineout-Overholt, 2019).
- ▶ Populations:
 - APP preceptors (0 to > 40 years experience)
 - Primarily APNs but also included PAs and some physicians

Synthesis of the Evidence

- ▶ **Purpose**
- ▶ **Survey Methods**
- ▶ **Themes**
 - Motivation
 - Barriers
- ▶ **Strengths**
- ▶ **Weaknesses**

Methods

▶ **Project Design**

- Program evaluation
- Needs assessment of VUMC APP preceptorship system

▶ **Setting**

- VUMC, large academic medical center that employs over 1,300 APPs
- APP preceptors routinely precept new employees and students
- No formal preceptorship education process

▶ **Participants**

- APP preceptors within VUMC
- Inpatient and outpatient

Methods

► Intervention

- Data from the APP survey was obtained from the Preceptorship Support Committee and thematic analysis was completed.
- Results of data analysis was shared with the Preceptorship Support Committee and DNP Project Committee.
- Dissemination of the results of the survey within the VUMC Advanced Practice Provider Leadership is planned for July 2022.

Methods

▶ **Survey Questions**

- What resources would allow you to feel supported as a preceptor?
- What has improved your experience as a preceptor?
- Please share your ideas for how VUMC can improve preceptor support and recognition.

▶ Anonymous

▶ REDCap Survey

Analysis

► Thematic analysis

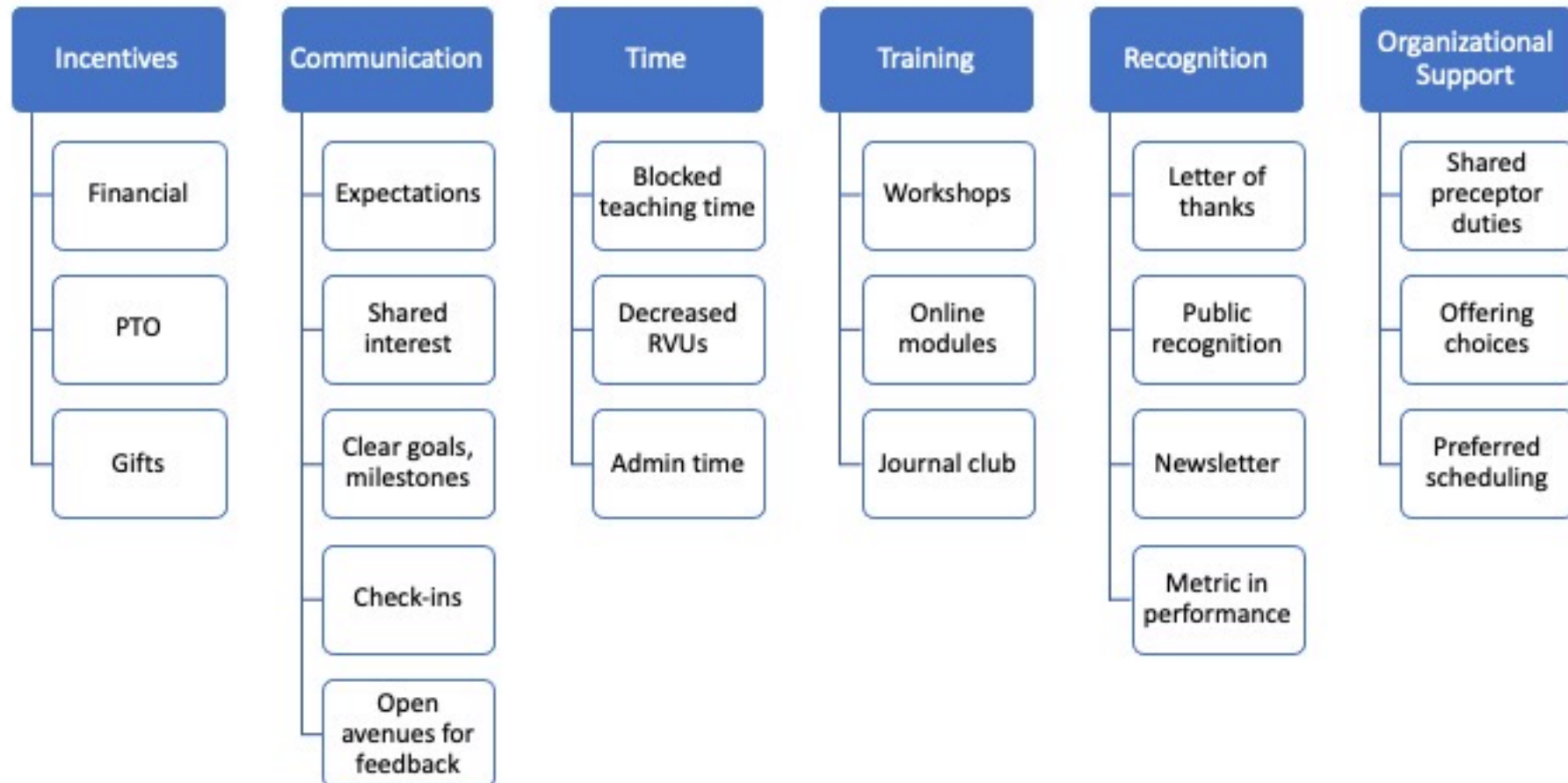
- Looking for patterns and themes
 - Familiarization with data
 - Generate initial codes
 - Observe for themes
 - Review Themes
 - Define and label
 - Construct final report (Braun & Clarke, 2006)
- Secondary member from Preceptorship Support Committee reviewed for validation.

Results

- There were a total of 295 narrative responses from 154 individuals which required thematic analysis.
- Major themes that were extracted from three open-ended questions included the desire for preceptor incentives, open communication, protected teaching time, preceptor training, meaningful recognition, and organizational support.

Results

Qualitative Themes



Results

► Financial Incentives (80 responses)

- “It would be nice to receive some financial compensation for taking on the additional role and added responsibilities.”
- “With the amount of critical care NPs growing, it may be beneficial to have a few appointed preceptors in each unit and compensate them.”
- “Preceptors in our unit are appreciated by the students, but there really is no recognition or incentive to precept. I consider it part of my professional practice to be a preceptor, but offering preceptor perks such as salary supplements, scheduling incentives (less on call, priority for vacation time), or even a thank you gift card would be appreciated.”

Results

- ▶ **Open Communication (68 responses)**
 - “The universities that have an active role in their student placement and actively seek out information and evaluations from clinical preceptors improve my experience.”
 - “Feeling able to provide honest and open feedback with instructors within the school of nursing makes the experience much better.”
 - “Students respond very positively to knowing what their limitations and expectations are right from the start.”
 - “When I am not someone’s primary preceptor, it’s challenging to figure out what skills the preceptee needs to be developing...guidance on expectations at certain points in either the student or new hire’s trajectory would be helpful.”

Results

► Protected Teaching Time (26 responses)

- “I wish we could have one visit blocked in the morning and one in the afternoon of a clinic day with a student, particularly a new student, to be able to have time to really help them learn and improve their clinic experience rather than just rushing from visit to visit and then trying to debrief at the end of the day.”
- “We often have very busy days normally, so having a student can really add to our workload. It would be nice to have a reduction in patients or acuity when having a student or new employee, at least at the beginning of their rotation.”

Results

► Protected Teaching Time (Continued)

- “More clinical resources to allow time with students [improves my experience as a preceptor]. Almost always the clinical load is heavy and does not allow appropriate precepting time with the student. At the end of the day, you feel like you have failed either the student or your patients. Always feeling like you failed something leads to clinical burnout or preceptor burnout. It would be helpful to equip students with self-directed ways to learn when they are in a busy environment and their preceptor's time is dedicated to their patients.”

Results

- ▶ Preceptor Training (46 responses)
 - Over 40 requests related to preceptor training
 - “I really enjoyed the preceptor workshop ... about 5-6 years ago—it was really helpful, and I would love to have a yearly course refresher.”
 - “I would be open to additional training and resources through the Office of Advanced Practice ... time to do this, however, is a factor for attending additional training given my other work responsibilities.”

Results

- ▶ **Meaningful Recognition (37 responses)**
 - “there is no recognition at the VUMC level for the time and effort it takes to precept a student,”
 - “are just expected to do this, no added pay, no recognition of any kind.”
 - “Some form of incentive program or recognition system to show that efforts do not go unnoticed.”

Results

- ▶ **Organizational Support (34 responses)**
 - “I think it would be much more beneficial for students to have preceptors within the hospital who actively wish to precept and who are more engaged with the school of nursing.”
 - “I feel that I would be a better preceptor and be able to precept more often if I felt supported in my current position. Providing another full-time equivalent (FTE) for a service that is overwhelmed would be a supportive action. This would allow for more time to precept and less stress overall.”

Discussion

- ▶ Financial Incentives
 - Gifts, gift cards, raffles
 - Paid time off (PTO)
 - Less call shifts
 - Earn additional continuing medical education funds
 - Bonuses for preceptors
- ▶ Although the most frequently desired motivation for precepting, financial incentives could be the most difficult to implement from an organization standpoint.

Discussion

- ▶ Open Communication
 - Between schools, students, advanced practice leadership, and new hires
 - Clear paths to provide and receive feedback
 - Expectations for skills and goals during rotation or orientation
 - Regular check-ins from school faculty and team leadership during rotation or orientation
- ▶ Open communication was found to improve preceptorship experiences whereas previous experiences with poor communication from schools or leadership appear to be a barrier to preceptorship.

Discussion

- ▶ Protected Teaching Time
 - Provide blocked time during the day for one-on-one teaching or feedback
 - Allow preceptors to have administrative hours
 - Decrease productivity expectations or census while precepting
- ▶ Respondents understood the value of guided clinical experiences and desire to give their preceptee the best experience possible by providing them with tailored feedback and dedicated educational opportunities.
 - Supporting preceptors in this way may help mitigate some of the increased stress that accompanies preceptorship.

Discussion

- ▶ Preceptor Training
 - Annual preceptor workshops
 - Online resources, self-guided training
 - Journal club
 - Requested topics included: delivering critical feedback, fostering clinical reasoning, balancing workload while precepting
- ▶ Suggestions included a class provided by faculty from the school of nursing on how to be a better preceptor, tools to maintain efficiency and prevent burnout, and a preceptor workshop geared toward APPs before their first experience as a preceptor.

Discussion

► Meaningful Recognition

- Incorporate preceptorship as a metric for job performance evaluations
- Preceptor recognition in Advanced Practice newsletter
- Share positive feedback with preceptor's leadership
- Thank you note from students or school of nursing
- Awards for outstanding preceptors nominated by students or new hires
- Increasing meaningful recognition for APP preceptors within VUMC may be the most easily attainable and financially affordable avenue for increasing preceptor motivation identified.

Discussion

► Organizational Support

- Desire to share precepting duties and the choice to decline precepting when feeling burned out.
- Requests for preferred scheduling or to block off days when preceptors would like to avoid having students.
- Preceptors want to feel their time is valued and to have a sense of control over when they precept students or new hires.
- Simply offering the preceptor some choice in their precepting duties may be a motivator to more consistent preceptorship.

Conclusion

- ▶ The need for qualified APP preceptors grows each year.
- ▶ Consideration of the motivation and barriers to precepting should be a topic of extensive discussion.
- ▶ Findings from this survey highlight a gap between desired resources and their availability within VUMC.

Conclusion

- ▶ Although financial incentives were overwhelmingly desired, responses indicate that motivation to precept may be amplified by simply fostering the altruistic intentions of many APP preceptors.
 - offering educational opportunities for preceptor development
 - affording adequate time to provide feedback to preceptees
 - improving communication from schools and leadership
 - increasing organizational recognition for the valuable service that these preceptors provide

Conclusion

- ▶ Further research should investigate how to successfully incorporate the need for preceptorship duties into the APP role while balancing clinical and professional responsibilities.

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