

Interview with Desirée Hensel

[VIDEO TRANSCRIPT – September 15, 2022]

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Lisa Bonsall: Hi, I'm Lisa Bonsall, senior clinical editor for Lippincott NursingCenter. I'm here at the 2022 Nursing Education Innovation Summit. And right now, I have the pleasure of speaking with Dr. Desirée Hensel. Dr. Hensel is an experienced educator and researcher who earned tenure for her excellence in teaching at Indiana University School of Nursing before assuming the position of inaugural Dean at Curry College of Nursing in Milton, Massachusetts.

Now, as the founder and CEO of Hensel Nursing Education Consulting, she works as a consultant, helping programs find pragmatic solutions to the many challenges of contemporary nursing education. Dr. Hensel, can you talk about leading innovative efforts to achieving continuity of education during the global pandemic?

Desirée Hensel: When I was the dean at Curry College, we saw the pandemic coming. We spent our whole spring break getting ready for what we knew was probably coming down the pike. And in fact, what they did was they extended spring break one week, gave everybody that much time to try to figure out how they were going to shift everything online.

But people come back to campus for one week and then everything was remote. We decided that we were going to not piecemeal things together. Several of our other schools in the area were trying to figure out how they were going to come up with clinical education. And they found a thing here, an activity here, an activity there. And were trying to piecemeal everything together.

But what we really thought was this was an opportunity for us to focus on clinical judgment. So we decided that we were going to approach clinical education in a very standardized way. We took the ACES cases, the ACE cases from the NLN, they are wonderfully done. They're three part scenarios. We were allowed on campus for what was supposed to be a week and ended up being three days before we got kicked off.

And we had faculty portray the actors and the nurse in these videos one time take nobody got a redo and we did 27 videos to be the foundations of our clinical education. And I can tell you that there was some pretty rough stuff there. I mean, I'm a pediatric nurse and I haven't assessed an adult patient in a really long time.

And they had me assessing a stroke victim. So you better believe there were mistakes to be made. So the way it worked was students got the pre activities that are associated with the cases, they watched the vignettes and then they debriefed using the clinical judgment model. After each session,

students had to do some sort of authenticated activity, whether it was write a care plan or whether it was right SBAR or look up meds.

But those were integrated in the day. So we mapped out an entire clinical day based on these cases, the three unfolding cases with all the pre activities that were involved, all the debriefing post activities, including the reflections that needed to be written and those authentic activities. We trained 50 part time clinical faculty over the course of those three days while we were down there trying to film these videos.

We were also upstairs trying to train faculty on how they were going to do online clinical education for their for the students. And what we found out was that we really did come up with a pretty good approach. And for our clinical education that those 27 videos and that very standardized approach really started to have a lot of meaning to our students.

So I think it was a very cohesive way that we went about providing clinical education. In addition to that, like many other places, we did contact tracing for our school. We were part of the effort where our nursing students actually helped our health center make calls to students. And it's authentic contact tracing. The last thing that we did was we had a partnership with Tufts Medical Center where our students could get clinical education while they were working for pay.

So in those three ways, we were able to provide continuity of education during the pandemic.

Lisa Bonsall: Congratulations on your new business. Can you tell us more about the need you are meeting for nursing education programs?

Desirée Hensel: So mostly what I've been doing is helping with faculty development specifically for NGN but I do other things for programs that have accreditation needs or programs that are trying to improve their pass rates. And so basically it's finding solutions to help people who, and my philosophy is I'm more pragmatic rather than philosophical, what works for one school may not work for another.

Lisa Bonsall: Lastly, you are famous for your NCLEX review book and workshops on in-class preparation. What is coming for the next generation and class?

Desirée Hensel: So we've been hearing a lot about it and I just love how the National Council has been describing it lately that it's a cheese pizza with pepperoni toppings. If you listen to Jason Schwartz, he's been telling you that NCLEX is still there. Think of NCLEX like cheese pizza. The cheese pizza bottom's not going away. But now it's got toppings and that's the next gen.

So what's coming down the pike is we have an exam that is going to make it still testing about things that are entry level practice, but in a way that is going to make it much harder to pass the exam by guessing. We really want to make sure that students are thinking through these questions. There are case studies that are infused in.

Everyone's going to have at least three case studies and some standalone items, but the case studies will have six questions with them. They will also include some new item types, such as drop and drag, highlighting and matrix questions to help see if students are really answering the questions because they know what the material is rather than being able to just get their way through a multiple choice question.

The idea is so that you are actually graduating nurses and are entering practice who really have a beginning level clinical judgment and aren't just good guessers.

Lisa Bonsall: Wonderful. Okay, let's hear about you. What led you to become a nurse educator?

Desirée Hensel: You know, I loved I was a neonatal nurse for over 20 years and it was a career I absolutely loved. But there also comes a time in your life when you want to do something different. And for me, that different was giving back to the profession. And so I went into nursing education. And what I really loved about nursing education was the creativity that it allows you that you can inspire in the next generation of nurses and that you could really start challenging the way things were.

I learned very early on not to say never. You tell your students this is the way it is now, but evidence is emerging every day. There are always new things to learn and you have to be a lifelong learner. So it just very much fits my philosophy that you should always trying to be growing and learning.

And I love learning with my students and from my students.

Lisa Bonsall: Thank you so much.

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