IT support for administrative planning of clinical practice

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Abstract
The administration of clinical practice placements for nursing students is a highly complex and information driven task. This demonstration is intended to give insight into the web based system KliPP (a Swedish acronym for Clinical Practice Planning) and to discuss the possibilities for further development and use.

Keywords: Clinical practice, Planning, Web based information system

Introduction
Clinical practice is an important part of nursing education. The administration of clinical practice placements for nursing students is a highly complex and information driven task considering the number of persons and health care settings involved. Further, relevant and sufficient information needs to be provided in a timely manner to all involved, e.g. students, teachers at institutions, and professionals in the health care facilities. At Dalarna University a need to improve the quality of the administrative system for planning and evaluating the use of clinical practice placements was identified. A DOS-based system was in use and the use of a more user friendly effective information technology system was thought to be a way of supporting the process and improving the quality.

Results
A web-based administrative system developed by the County Council of Uppsala in collaboration with Uppsala University and Uppsala Community, was identified as meeting the demands. This demonstration is intended to give insight into the use and possibilities for further development of the system KliPP (a Swedish acronym for Clinical Practice Planning). The system runs on a SQL-server and there are three main levels of access to the database: reader, user (with some registration) and administrator. Students and health care personnel log in as readers, while the administrator and teachers on the nursing courses have administrative access.

The system is up and running in various regions in Sweden. In the province of Dalarna it is used throughout the whole planning process by the administrator and the nurse teachers. When the plans for the next semester are made, students and health care personal can log in and access the information they need. The health care personal can see which periods they will take on students as well as their contact details. The students can see what facility they have been placed in and access relevant information and contact details. The teachers can easily have an overview of their students’ placements together with ward contact details. Additionally, the system provides information about the course syllabus, evaluation forms and other material related to the clinical education. Further, the information in the system can be used as a foundation for billing and provide longitudinal data for evaluation and quality improvement of clinical practice in educational programs.

Conclusion
The KliPP system advances the planning and evaluation of clinical practice placements by providing accurate information to all persons that are involved: care facilities, education, as well as the student herself. There are also possibilities of expanding the database to a national level.

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