Nursing Exchange Student's Experiences

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Nursing Exchange Student's Experiences of her Participation in Surgical Nursing Simulations

My Name is Julia Großegger and I am visiting Finland for my Exchange. This article considers my staying at Seinäjoki University of Applied Science in faculty of Health care and social work.

In Germany I'm studying Health-Care Management, but this subject doesn't exist here in Seinäjoki. So I decided to visit some courses of the Nursing Program. First, I had problems finding the right courses, because it is quite different than in Germany.

I would like to speak about the course *Surgical Nursing* which also includes Simulation lessons for the future nurses. During my first days I was impressed about the equipment that was offered to the students for example hospital beds, dressings, dummies for practicing as well as big practice rooms. Simulations were mixed in small practice groups of Finnish students and students who are studying Nursing in English, so that the simulations were heard in Finnish and in English. The aim is for all students to learn Finnish, so this arrangement was beneficial for the students who don't speak Finnish fluently. There were clear rules from the outset of the Simulations: 'Nobody laughs about mistakes' and 'Whatever happens, stays in the group so that a good co-operation is possible'. The simulation was based on various disease scenarios that were played through. Everybody took the simulation seriously and acted the way they would in a real Nurse-Patient Situation. For me, it was good to see how professional the students act as well as being a part of the simulation not only an observer. The simulation included a microphone for the acting person and also a video transfer, so that the others could see and learn from the acting people.

At the end of each role play there was a professional assessment as well as the most important thing: a self-evaluation to say what went well and what could have been done better the next time. The evaluation was always very helpful and criticism was factually. There was always a warm interaction between students and teachers so that you felt immediately comfortable.

In Germany it is quite different: to become a nurse you don't go to university but do practical training. There, the students have a weekly rotas: three weeks going to school and three weeks working. The training lasts three years. I cannot say which way is better to become a nurse but I have to say that in German nursing schools they don't have the great equipment as the Finns have. It is a big advantage for Finnish students to be able to use the same equipment they would use in Seinäjoki hospital.

I had to say that I felt very comfortable in the simulations and also in the Surgical Nursing course. Seinäjoki has a great nursing program, which helps to teach professional future nurses. I think there is no better option to study nursing as here at SeAMK.

Teacher’s comments

It is always good to have foreign students in our lessons. Simulations are one way to learn surgical Nursing. Julia does not study nursing but still we were able to fit her into simulations. It is good that our students have chances to meet students from another cultures. This is a way to increase their interest for exchange periods abroad. This is also a way to improve their cultural competence and I think that there should be more international exchange students in our lessons at SeAMK. Julia was very open minded, and she was willing to take part into simulated patient situations. Still we had to use some creativity that we were able to give her a role that was not too difficult. In simulations every teacher has to think what role is suitable for students because the student can not take too difficult role in it. I am glad that I met you Julia and I hope your time in Seinäjoki was good and you will meet us again.

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