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## Assessing Clinical Judgment in Pre-Licensure Nursing Students

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Nursing clinical is a very complex environment for students and faculty. Students are required to apply classroom concepts to their assigned patient, who often have more than one diagnosis. It is difficult for students to identify how one diagnosis may impact another diagnosis. The challenge for clinical faculty is to assess that students are providing safe patient care. In addition, it is the responsibility of the clinical faculty to assess that students are developing clinical judgment.

Two strategies, concept mapping and individual conferences, are utilized to assess the clinical judgment of nursing students. In the development of the concept map, the student is required to organize and establish relationships between the patient's diagnoses and chart data. During clinical, the student and the faculty meet to discuss the concept map. The student explains the concept map, including the data that supports the medical / surgical diagnoses. In assessing clinical judgment, the student discusses the patient's current and / or potential complications (s) and the specific data that supports the development of the complication (s). How would the student know that the complication was occurring? What action would the student take? If an intervention was implemented, how would the student assess the effectiveness? What data would support the effectiveness of the intervention?

Comments from students and clinical faculty on the concept maps and the clinical conference have been extremely positive. Students have commented that the clinical conferences helped them "put all the pieces together". The clinical faculty identified that they were able to assess the strengths and limitations of the student's clinical judgment. It also provided an opportunity for the clinical faculty to implement strategies to improve clinical judgment in weaker students.

This presentation will discuss the benefits and challenges of concept mapping and individual clinical conferences in assessing clinical judgment in pre-licensure baccalaureate nursing students.

### Biography

Mary Wcisel is an Associate Professor of Nursing at Saint Mary's College in Notre Dame, Indiana, USA. She began her career teaching in a practical nursing program and then moved to an associate degree program. For the past 18 years she has been teaching in a baccalaureate program. In her current position, she teaches physical assessment and fundamentals to sophomore students and an advanced medical-surgical course to senior students. Mary is also interested in developing strategies to assist students in passing the nursing licensure exam.

### Notes: