

Developing a Comprehensive Emotional Intelligence Curriculum

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Aim of Quality Improvement Project

Enhance the Nurse Anesthesia Program's (NAP) existing Emotional Intelligence (EI) curriculum in order to:

- Promote Student Registered Nurse Anesthetists (SRNAs) EI skills
- Optimize SRNA engagement and satisfaction with EI curriculum
- Apply best available evidence to course design and content
- Assess SRNAs perceptions of the enhanced EI curriculum

Why Emotional Intelligence Curriculum?

Development of EI skills in health profession students supports their successful progression & wellbeing.



During an SRNAs program of study, they must:

- Be accountable to effectively manage their study-life-balance
- Embrace deep learning (critical analysis, synthesis, application)
- Demonstrate competency in diagnostic reasoning, clinical decision making, patient safety routines, technical skills development, and specialty care management
- Navigate stressful clinical environments at multiple sites
- Have difficult conversations with patients and preceptors

High EI skills are essential if one is to do this well!

EI is defined as the ability to recognize, understand, and regulate one's own emotions as well as those of others and is composed of five domains.

Quality Improvement Methodology

1. **Improvements to existing curriculum were identified** with EI faculty leads.
2. **EI literature was identified and analyzed** to obtain subject matter expertise, EI teaching examples, & best practices.
3. **Five EI modules were created** for in-person delivery; one for each domain. Each modules was 60-minutes.
4. **Updated modules were reviewed & approved** by faculty leads.
5. **One EI module was co-taught per month** with faculty leads between (January-May, 2023) to Team 23 & 24 (n=70).
6. **Student evaluations were obtained** of previous vs. newer EI curriculum using a quantitative survey (4-point Likert scale) that also included qualitative narrative responses.
7. **Descriptive statistics & thematic analysis** were used to evaluate survey findings.

Key Features of Revised EI Curriculum

1. **Modules were structured for each domain** and included learning objectives, outcomes, activities, teaching instructions and applicable COA standards.
2. **Activities engaged students** in role-playing, large group discussion, reflective journaling, interpersonal communication and stress reduction strategy using a thumb-ball stress management tool.
3. **Conducted in-person and attendance** was mandated.
4. **The in-person EI activities were adopted** from the Training Course on Emotional Intelligence (Gilar-Corb et al., 2019).

Limitations

- Pre - post survey did not use identical nomenclature & precluded comparison for some variables
- Large class size and 50-minute time frame limited instructors' abilities to provide individualized and expansive feedback during EI sessions.

Recommendations

- An iterative design process of survey questions is important to ensure that questions are based on ongoing feedback and experiences during the QI project.
- Create opportunities for smaller group engagement
- Ongoing refinement of EI activities to accommodate learning styles.

Quantitative Survey Results

- Students perceived the updated curriculum enhanced their EI attributes more than the original curriculum (78.79% vs 98.21%; $p = 0.005$); preferred the in-person to virtual teaching approach (51.51% vs 78.21%; $p = 0.000$); and preferred to have more frequent EI training (33.33% VS 87.18%; $p = 0.000$).
- Mandating student attendance as part of the updated curriculum resulted in a greater number of SRNAs participating in the in-person EI training compared to the virtual EI training (Cohort 2023, mean 7 vs 27 $p = 0.017$; Cohort 2024, mean 15 vs 36, $p = 0.000$).
- Students recommended a combination of in-person + virtual (41%), all-in person (28%), or all-virtual (26%) EI training.
- Students (85%) agreed that the updated curriculum was good, or excellent and their personal learning goals were met.

Qualitative Survey Results

Theme I: Satisfaction with the updated curriculum

Student Experience

"I really enjoyed the in person EQi activities during the return to campus. They were fun, engaging and helpful. The online EQi sessions were difficult to engage and interact with and always felt more like busy work than helpfulness."

"It was nice learning some strategies peers use to manage stress and make decisions."

"[I enjoyed learning] new methods from peers as to how to cope within different realms of EQi. I also appreciate how the sessions were built into RTC days and NOT additional workdays"

Theme II: Recommended improvements.

More Application of EI Activities

"Need more student interaction"

"Incorporate activities that are fun and not too much talking at us"

Maintain EI Focus

"...and please be more relevant to our actual educational process. RTC is plagued by people boasting clinical stories and scare tactics for exam scores. Irrelevant discussions and job fairs are not helpful.

Create Small Discussion Groups

"Smaller groups to discuss. I think it will allow more people to open and discuss"

References? Scan me

