

Exploring Chronic Health Conditions in Families: An Innovative Interview-based Experience Conducted by Nursing Students



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Conflict of interest

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Background

“The workforce of the future needs to attract and retain registered nurses who **choose to practice in diverse settings**, including community settings, to sustain the nation’s health (AACN, 2021, p. 6).”



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THE ESSENTIALS

“The future consumers of health care are changing...from passive participants in medically focused acute care environments to **engaged participants** of healthcare services. They actively participate in managing...their **chronic illnesses but also acute care exacerbations**. Thus, nurses need an understanding of **consumer engagement and experience** across all settings as an essential component of **person-centered, quality care** (AACN, 2021, p. 7-8).”



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“Future of Healthcare Delivery”



(American Association of Colleges of Nursing [AACN], 2021, p. 19)



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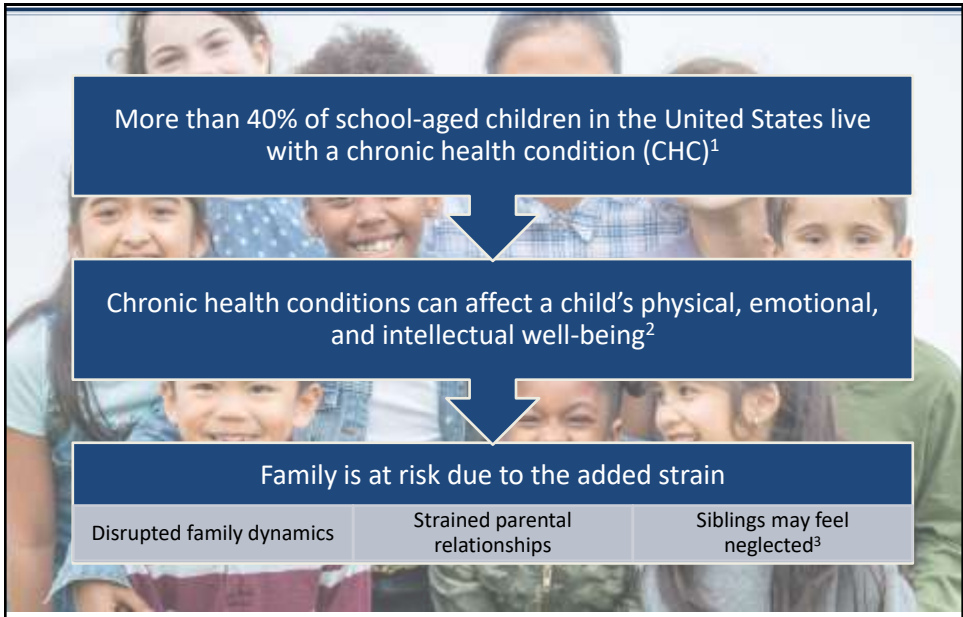
Family Interview Assignment



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More than 40% of school-aged children in the United States live with a chronic health condition (CHC)¹

Chronic health conditions can affect a child's physical, emotional, and intellectual well-being²


Family is at risk due to the added strain

Disrupted family dynamics	Strained parental relationships	Siblings may feel neglected ³
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Help Students

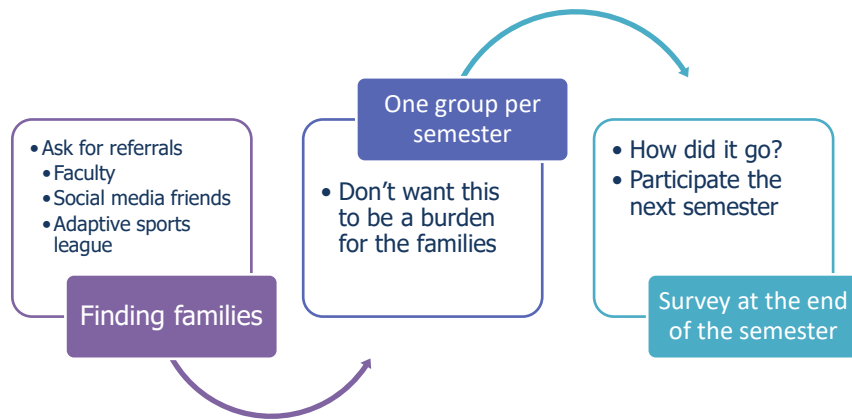
- Recognize the impact of CHCs on the family
- Identify how nurses could improve outcomes
- Evaluate the influence of social determinants of health
- Understand family-centered care
- Increase empathy
- Improve communication skills

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How to Start



Approach



Assigned groups of
2-3 students

Students were given

- Family contact information
- Basic information about the child
 - Age
 - Diagnosis



Experience Consisted of Four Parts



Preparation worksheet



Semi-structured interview



Small group debrief session



Reflective writing assignment



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Preparation worksheet

Growth and Development

- Expected milestones based on the chronological age
- How could the chronic condition affect the child's growth and development
- Specific measures that could foster the child's growth and development

Pathophysiology

- Describe in your own words (5-7 sentences)
- What body systems are directly impacted by this disorder/condition and how are those systems affected (table)

Anticipate

- What functional or activity restrictions or limitations might this child have
- Safety concerns (in order of priority) and what should be done to prevent/decrease risk of each
- Potential psychosocial concerns and the nurse's role in addressing each of those concerns

Resources

- What services or supplies (i.e., O2, PT, OT, RT, nutrition, etc) could you expect and why
- List at least three community resources



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Semi-structured interview

In-person

- Home
- Other location

Work around families' schedule

(Interview Guide)

- Tell me about _____ (name of child)
- What does a typical day look like for _____ (child)?
 - Medications/Treatments/Therapies
 - Daycare/School accommodations
 - Dietary needs
 - Social activities and time with friends
 - Travel needs
 - Supplies or equipment when away from home
 - Overnight needs
 - Birthday parties, camps, etc.
- Tell me about _____ (child)'s growth and development
 - Do you feel the child has met milestones at age-appropriate stages?
 - How is developmental progress supported for the child?
- Based on _____ (child)'s primary diagnosis, what are the risks of getting sick?
 - Does _____ (child) get sick more often than other children?
 - What signs and symptoms of illness does the child have that might be different from other children?
 - How do sick days affect you and your family?
 - How do you decide when to go to a doctor or the emergency department?
- Chronic illness and treatment can be expensive and isolating:
 - What has been your experience connecting with community resources for help?
 - Is there an online community that you have found helpful?
 - How do you receive support from family, church group, friends?



Debrief session

Meet in small groups (6-8 students)

Without partner

Short summary of the diagnoses

Experience of the family

Advice from the family

Takeaways



Reflective writing assignment

Tanner's Clinical Judgment Model

- Notice
- Interpret
- Respond
- Reflect

Assignment Outline

Paragraph I – Family Introduction

- a. Include a short introduction about the family you visited and the child with the chronic illness.
- b. Please include personal health information (PHI) by using first names only.

Paragraph II – Notice

- a. What did you notice as you were interviewing the caregiver? (tone, environment, family interactions, nonverbal level of discussion, etc.)
- b. Was the developmental level of the child the same as you identified in the preparation worksheet based on chronological age? Why?
- c. What did you notice that may put the child and their family at risk for health disparity?
- d. What strengths or resources did you notice in the family?

Paragraph III – Interpret

- a. How did you feel during the interview? How did it feel to think of yourself in the place of the parent/caregiver?
- b. Did you experience frustrations or other emotions during the interview?
- c. What other information would have been helpful to consider during the discussion?
- d. Have you known a parent/caregiver for a chronically ill child before? How did this compare to your previous experience?

Paragraph IV – Respond

- a. What were some of your responses to the attitude or emotions of the family members?
- b. How did you respond to any unexpected emotion you may have experienced?
- c. Would you approach this situation differently in the future? How?

Paragraph V – Reflect

- a. Describe ways your nursing skills have expanded because of this experience.
- b. Name one thing you might do about your care of a chronic child in the future.
- c. Describe any changes in your values or beliefs because of this experience.
- d. What rewards did you experience from the discussion?
- e. What challenges did you experience from the discussion?
- f. In what ways did this experience bring you closer to being a nurse?



Student Experience

- "I have read about chronic illnesses and have studied them for exams, but it was an entirely new experience interacting with a family who was going through the experience first-hand. I learned things I do not think I could ever learn in a textbook."
- "Interviewing my family was the most rewarding experience I have had in the nursing program so far."
- "I would like to say how grateful I am for this amazing opportunity to interview this sweet family. I would highly recommend this to any student and would gladly do it again. The things I have learned from this experience could not have been learned in any other way, and I have developed skills that will assist me in becoming a better nurse in the future."
- "When I was first considering this assignment, I originally believed we were just going to burden a busy parent with our seemingly arbitrary assignment. However, [the mom] was so welcoming and willing to share her experiences, which ultimately dispelled my initial reluctance and helped me to see how this was a very worthwhile experience."



Parent Experience

"So grateful to have the opportunity to help out and be a part of this with the students."

"I appreciated how they seemed so prepared and thoughtful with the questions and that they didn't try to just move me through a bunch of questions but that they really listened and seemed like they cared. We LOVE to participate in this."

"I have loved doing this. Thank you for the opportunity 😊"



Limitations

Finding enough families

Time consuming to coordinate

Unanticipated illness in child

Student procrastination

Student complaints prior to experience 😊



Conclusion:

- Student clinical experiences usually focus on acute care (hospitals)
 - Enhanced understanding of care before and after
- Assessment and communication skills improve



ANY
QUESTIONS?



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