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Neuroscience education – Evaluating the impact of a bespoke University validated ‘Neuroscience Care and Management’ course.

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Background

Literature reviews and Department of Health documents establish a clear need for post graduate specialist education to maintain patient safety. Prior to 2017 the Neuroscience degree course in the West Midlands was not sustainable, so through the British Association of Neuroscience Nurses network a relationship with Buckinghamshire New University was established and a new post registration module was developed. Challenges in its creation and delivery included ensuring it met the needs of healthcare professionals from a range of Neuroscience clinical settings and that the course was financially viable for attendees, the National Health Service (NHS) Trust delivering it and the University. As the programme was to be delivered in an NHS setting, at distance from the University it was important that academic support and regulation could still be maintained. These challenges were overcome by utilising local networks, regular review of feedback from the course and through quality assurance of lectures. The course evaluated extremely well after its first run, with staff stating how it would improve the care they provided on return to their clinical areas. Five years on, the programme team felt it would be appropriate to formally evaluate the impact of the course on the students and their practice.

Materials and methods

A student experience questionnaire has been developed by our team and distributed to students who completed the course. The questionnaire poses questions to evaluate changes students have made in their practice including changes to knowledge and attitude. Impact of the course on career progression is also discussed. The questions addressed organisational priorities by asking students about the impact of the course on staffing retention and patient safety. Finally, open-ended questions asked for comments and suggestions about the highlights and development needs of the course to allow the students to expand the feedback on their educational experience.

Results

This presentation will be the first time the results have been made public. Data collection is in process and thematic analysis of these will be presented.

Conclusions

These findings link to the theme of Neuroscience education and will add to the existing body of work on how post graduate education is key to the future development of Neuroscience Nursing. The information will not only develop practice locally but will support educators across the speciality in developing ideas about the impact of education on practice and individual development, as well as provide guidance for neuroscience programme development and evaluation.