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Abstract - 300 words

### **Student Nurse Practitioner Communication Skills when using Electronic Health Records (EHR) during Health History Taking**

**Background:** The Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act (HITECH) is requiring use of EHRs to improve quality and efficiency of patient care. Development of EHR communication skills is needed.

**Purpose:** Nurse practitioner (NP) students' EHR communication skills were studied to inform future teaching.

**Theoretical Framework:** Orlando's Dynamic Nurse-Patient Relationship.

**Methods:** NP students, recently instructed on EHR use, were videotaped conducting a health history (n=20). In this descriptive study, these observational strategies were employed: 1. Using OD LOG software, time spent typing and talking, typing only, and looking at computer without talking were measured. 2. Two observers completed a 10-point communication skills checklist. 3. Students' placement of the laptop computers was recorded. Using descriptive statistics, the total time of the history-taking was measured (mean and range). Times spent using the computer were summed and a percent of the total interview calculated. Students' rating on each skill and most common computer position were calculated. Inter-rater reliability was 0.84.

**Results:** The mean history taking time was 11.4 minutes with 3.5 minutes spent: typing and talking (76.56 sec) typing only (88.35 sec) and looking at computer not talking (82.2sec), totaling 38.9% of the visit. Students scored lowest on communications skills associated with EHR use (77.5% educated patient about the EHR use, 70% explained long periods of typing and 62.5% positioned computer so patient could see it).

**Conclusions/Implications:** Of the time spent taking the health history, more than a third was spent on the computer, and nearly two thirds of that time was spent without communicating to the patient at all. With the introduction of the EHR into the nurse/patient relationship, attention must be paid to communication skills. This research is a beginning step to understanding how to instruct student nurse practitioners on mastery of these skills.