"I've Got Chills and I'm Losing Control" Resolving Performance Anxiety in Nurse Graduates

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Background

- Anxiety is a heightened level of emotion emanating from fear of the unknown
- Nurse graduates encounter high levels of anxiety which is a barrier to learning
- Addressing anxiety deserves attention and intervention so nurse graduates can apply their knowledge skillfully in an environment that is supportive and conducive to learning
- Failure in transitioning to practice competently compromises patient safety and accrues costs.

Goals

- Determine factors that create anxiety for nurse graduates
- Identify and implement strategies to alleviate experienced anxiety
- Create a learning environment that encourages nurse graduates transition to practice

Factors Causing Anxiety

- Lack of clinical knowledge and confidence in nursing skills
- Workload demands
- Forming relationships with peers
- Prioritization and organization related to care delivery
- Interaction with physicians
- Interaction with patient and family

Implementation Process

- Identified factors nurse graduates consider as anxiety provoking
- Created the Performance Anxiety Assessment Tool (modified with permission from the Washington Clinical Experience Assessment Tool)
- Nurse graduate completed the Performance Anxiety Assessment Tool pre and post orientation to compare results
- Anxiety reduction strategies were developed based on theories of cognitive and psychosocial development
- Nurse Graduate completed the Performance Anxiety Strategies Evaluation Form to determine effectiveness of interventions

Theories/Strategies

- Bandura- Social Cognitive Theory (SCT)
- Benner Model of Clinical Competence
- Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory
- Slow Emersion
- Emphasis on Workflow
- Simulation
- Debriefing
- Socialization
- Role Modeling
- Emotional Support
- Healthy Preceptors

Tools

Name of Orientee ○ Pre Orientation ○ Post Orientation

Performance Anxiety Assessment Tool
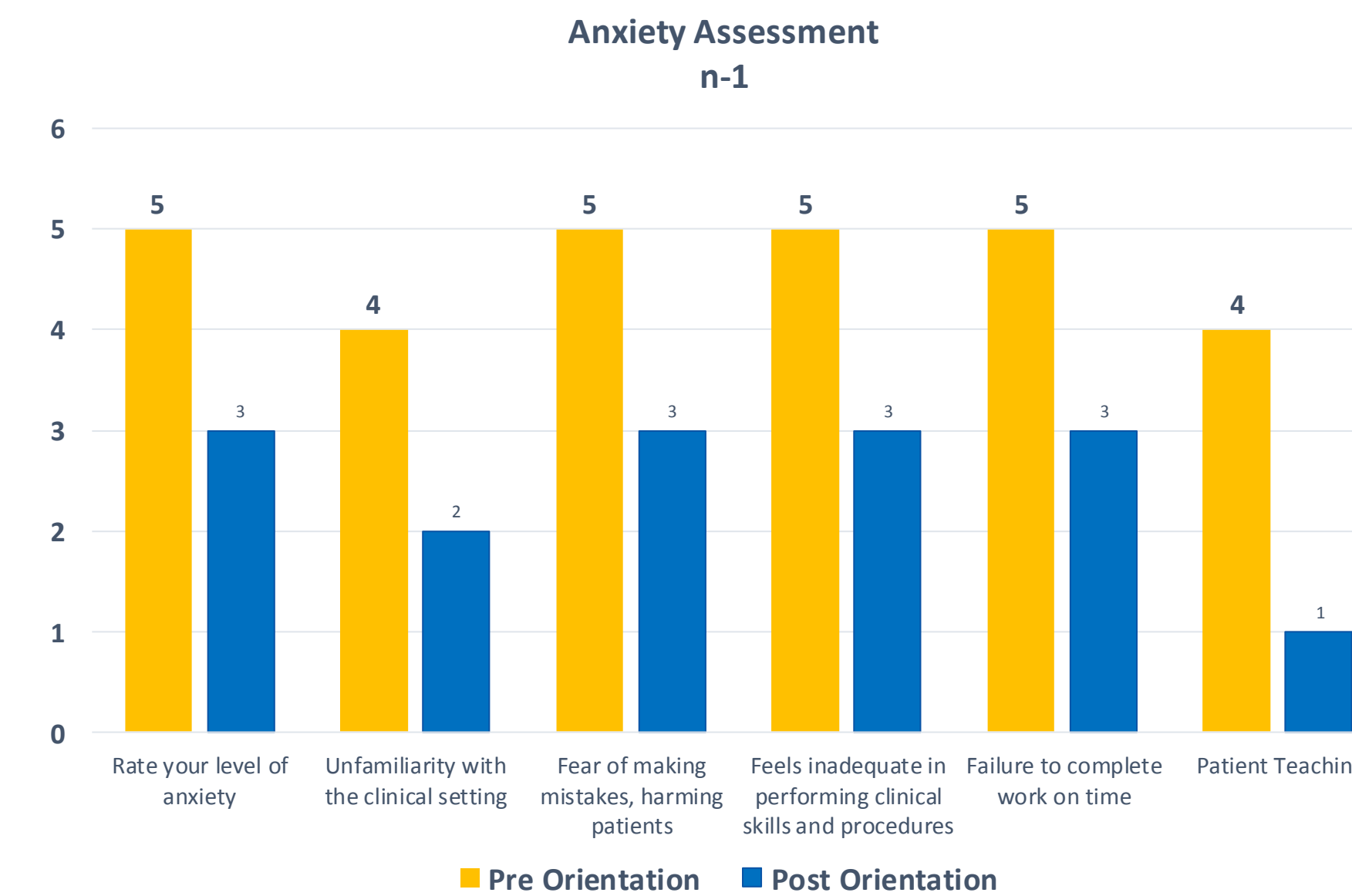(Rate according to 1= Least Concern to 5 Most Concern)

Item	1	2	3	4	5	Comments
Rate your level of anxiety						
Unfamiliarity with the clinical setting						
Fear of making mistakes, harming patients						
Feels inadequate in performing clinical skills and procedures						

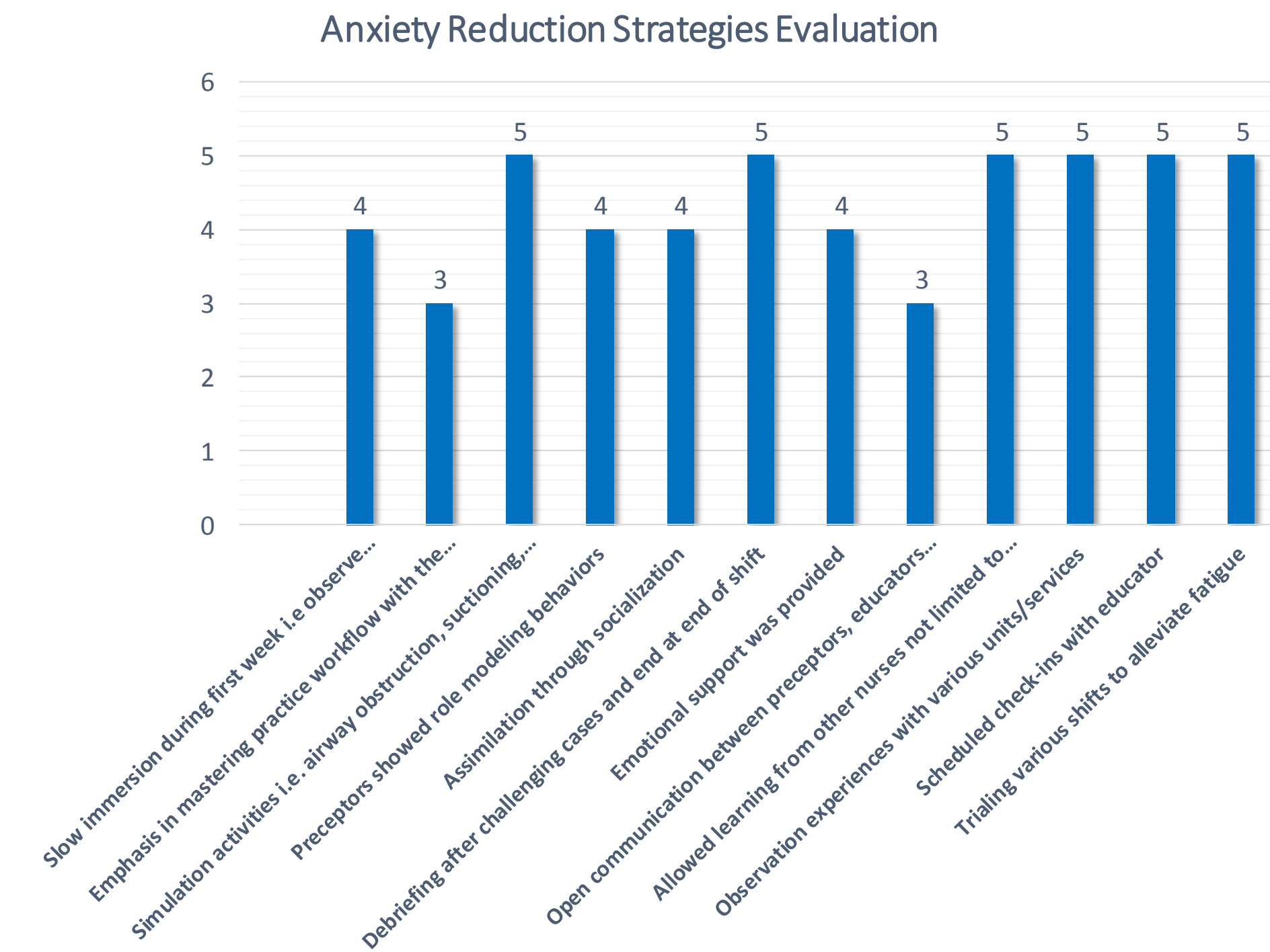**Performance Anxiety Reduction Strategies Evaluation**   Name:
Please rate your response to each strategy (1-Lowest to 5-Highest)

Strategy	1	2	3	4	5	Comment
Slow immersion during first week i.e observe environment and workflow						
Emphasis in mastering practice workflow with the assistance of workflow grid						
Simulation activities i.e. airway obstruction, suctioning, arterial Line						
Preceptors showed role modeling behaviors						
Assimilation through						

Results

Anxiety Reduction Strategies Evaluation

Slow immersion during first week i.e observe... : 4
Emphasis in mastering practice workflow with the... : 3
Simulation activities i.e. airway obstruction, suctioning,... : 5
Preceptors showed role modeling behaviors : 4
Debriefing after challenging cases and end at end of shift : 4
Assimilation through socialization : 5
Emotional support was provided : 4
Open communication between preceptors, educators... : 3
Allowed learning from other nurses not limited to... : 5
Observation experiences with various units/services : 5
Scheduled check-ins with educator : 5
Trialing various shifts to alleviate fatigue : 5

Results

Anxiety Assessment
n-1

	Pre Orientation	Post Orientation
Rate your level of anxiety	5	3
Unfamiliarity with the clinical setting	4	2
Fear of making mistakes, harming patients	5	3
Feels inadequate in performing clinical skills and procedures	5	3
Failure to complete work on time	5	3
Patient Teaching	4	1

Implications for Practice

- Resolving nurse graduate anxiety is important for successful transition to practice
- Using the Anxiety Assessment Tool assists in customizing nurse graduate orientation program, focusing on areas needing assistance and support
- Incorporating cognitive and psychosocial developmental theories provide structure in envisioning an action plan to alleviate performance anxiety

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