Integration of TeamSTEPPS Framework and Escape Room Learning to Improve Teamwork and Collaboration

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Abstract

Problem and Purpose

As the need for health care professionals continues to grow, different learning environments have been assessed to optimize knowledge while keeping the student engaged. Escape rooms—live-action team-based exercises (Adams & Crawford, 2018)—supplemented with TeamSTEPPS tools can assist in overall team performance while keeping the participant engaged in a new learning environment (Sheppard, Williams & Klein 2013). The goal of this project is to enhance teamwork and collaboration among a senior clinical nursing leadership emergency department group through the integration of TeamSTEPPS concepts and escape room action learning. This quality-improvement project aims to improve communication and teamwork skills in a small cohort of nurse leaders in a large urban academic medical center while exploring the engagement and depth of learning experience for the participant. This concept was explored through the integration of TeamSTEPPS tools and strategies in an escape room setting to improve team dynamics and cohesiveness in a new dynamic way in a small cohort of nurse leaders.

Methods

Twelve nurse leaders completed two different escape rooms while observers completed the TeamSTEPPS observation tool assessing team dynamics and performance and participants assessed their perceptions before and after intervention. These nurses also were observed at staff meetings and completed a perceptions tool on teamwork pre- and post-intervention. A post–escape room validated survey was completed by participants to assess learning and interest in this interactive learning exercise.

Results

There was a significant statistical difference after TeamSTEPPS and escape room intervention (Mean 17.3 and p=0.004 SD 5.9) when compared to before intervention, and a more positive sense of teamwork was noted. In addition, 75% of the nurses strongly agreed that the escape room was engaging and fun, with 25% agreeing; 91.7% agreed or strongly agreed that the escape room was an effective team-building exercise with 100% agreeing or strongly agreeing to recommend the escape room experience to others who are interested in teamwork.

Conclusion

This group of nurse leaders validated the integration of TeamSTEPPS tools and strategies in an escape room setting as an enjoyable and engaging way to learn while providing an effective team-building activity. This small cohort demonstrates that new methods of learning such as an escape room should be explored further for engaging participants and improving communication and teamwork skills.