nTrack™ Nursing Clinical Log
SPRING 2012
Getting Students—and a Program—on Track for a Successful Future

The nTrack™ Nursing Clinical Log System from Skyscape.com helped put a major nursing program on the cutting edge of the changing healthcare environment.

The Regis College School of Nursing and Health Professions, designated as a National League for Nursing Center of Excellence from 2008 to 2011, has shown a commitment to remaining an innovative leader with its adoption of the nTrack™ Nursing Clinical Log System for its undergraduate nursing students.

nTrack is a cutting-edge administrative and teaching tool developed by Skyscape, the worldwide leader in delivering mobile medical information to practitioners at the point of care.

What is nTrack?
The nTrack Nursing Clinical Log System is a complete solution for tracking students’ laboratory and clinical work. nTrack’s mobile and HIPAA-compliant interface allows students to enter clinical information at the point of care—as if they were using an EHR system—and allows faculty to quickly and easily track these clinical encounters and provide feedback.

Integration with a suite of Skyscape mobile medical textbooks and clinical resources further enhances the learning opportunity for students as they are trained to quickly access medical information related to their clinical encounters. Skyscape’s patented SmartLink™ technology makes this knowledge integration seamless, allowing users to move intuitively from records to textbooks to medical calculators and other tools.

Implementation of nTrack at Regis
Regis adopted the nTrack system in the fall of 2010. At the time, Assistant Dean for Nursing, Nancy Phoenix Bittner, cited the institution’s commitment to technological innovation, explaining, “nTrack provides our students with an incredible opportunity to track their own progress, allows faculty members to advise students in the field, and enables us to constantly assess the effectiveness of our program.”

**Key Uses for the Skyscape nTrack™ Nursing Clinical Log System**

**Pre-Clinical**
- Track students’ understanding in the classroom
- Track lab skills and monitor preparation for clinical

**Clinical**
- Track patient encounters in real time with point-of-care data entry—without Internet connectivity requirements
- Built-in feedback mechanism for communicating to students
- Track skills and assessments in clinical setting
- Clinical Journal for students to document experiences and faculty to review
- Access to Skyscape Medical Resources from within application
- Paperless student evaluation tools

**Reporting**
- Completed/Uncompleted skills inventory
- Individual student performance and aggregate data across class or program
- Student portfolio of skills, encounters, feedback, and evaluations for clinical placements and job interviews
- Offers easy access to performance data required for program accreditation
The Skyscape team worked with Regis to tailor its “off-the-shelf” nTrack solution to meet program requirements with custom checklists and forms. Throughout its first year, nTrack was available to students on a pilot basis, but not mandated by faculty. Beginning in the fall of 2011, in order to take full advantage of student tracking, use of nTrack became a requirement for undergraduate clinical hours.

Donna Kilicoyne Orthoefer, a nursing faculty member who took the lead on implementation, explains, “A key is really explaining nTrack up front to the faculty to show them how it works and point out the benefits. Once the faculty buys in, then the students follow. With all technological innovation in healthcare, you might see initial resistance to doing things a new way – but after about 6 months, a lot of these people would never go back to pens and paper, or whatever other methods they were using.”

**How does nTrack benefit faculty?**

Orthoefer mentioned a colleague who had just switched from a course using nTrack to one without. “I wish these students were using nTrack – I can’t keep up with all this paper!” her colleague told her.

But Orthoefer points out that the benefits of nTrack go beyond the obvious reduction in paper—in some cases, communication was handled in e-mails—also paperless, but sometimes even harder to organize. With logs that update in real time, faculty can respond quickly to student experiences. With paper journals, information might be reviewed and discussed days or weeks later—but with nTrack, a clinical experience could be discussed the next day or even the same day.

The organized log of experiences gives faculty the opportunity to teach better: “Making assignments is easier,” Orthoefer said. “I can see that one student has had three GI patients—I’m not going to give another patient with a GI bleed; I’ll make sure they experience a cardiovascular patient. nTrack makes it easier to give students a more well-rounded experience.”

This pedagogic benefit extends beyond a single class experience. Printing nTrack logs allows students to arrive at a new class or hospital placement with a detailed list of where they have experience and where they need more experience.

**How does nTrack benefit students?**

“You would think today’s students—who text each other like breathing air—would be comfortable using handhelds,” Orthoefer says. “But they’re not. It’s something they have to get comfortable with. Not only does nTrack teach them how to manipulate another system—because they’ll eventually have to learn plenty of EHR systems—but the access to Skyscape medical resources and references also makes them more comfortable with consulting handheld technology in the healthcare setting.”

Orthoefer also stressed the importance of nTrack as a means for allowing students to take charge of their education and clinical experience. Students can easily review the types of clinical experiences they’ve had and actively seek out other experiences.
A student’s nTrack log becomes a clinical portfolio, allowing them to seek out experiences for a more well-rounded education and highlight the depth of their experiences in particular areas for their own resumes.

**How does nTrack benefit a nursing program?**
Relationships with area hospitals are vital for nursing programs and can have a strong effect on the ability of students to win placements. Orthoefer says that the ability to send students on assignments with an nTrack log—clearly highlighting a student’s experiences and needs—can make the experience much easier for the institution.

“It’s definitely a good will thing,” she said. “You want to be the school that sends students who are easy to deal with. When your programs get a great reputation with the hospitals, that’s gold for nursing institutions.”

**Questions about nTrack at your institution?**
Learn more at www.skyscape.com/group/grouphome.aspx

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