

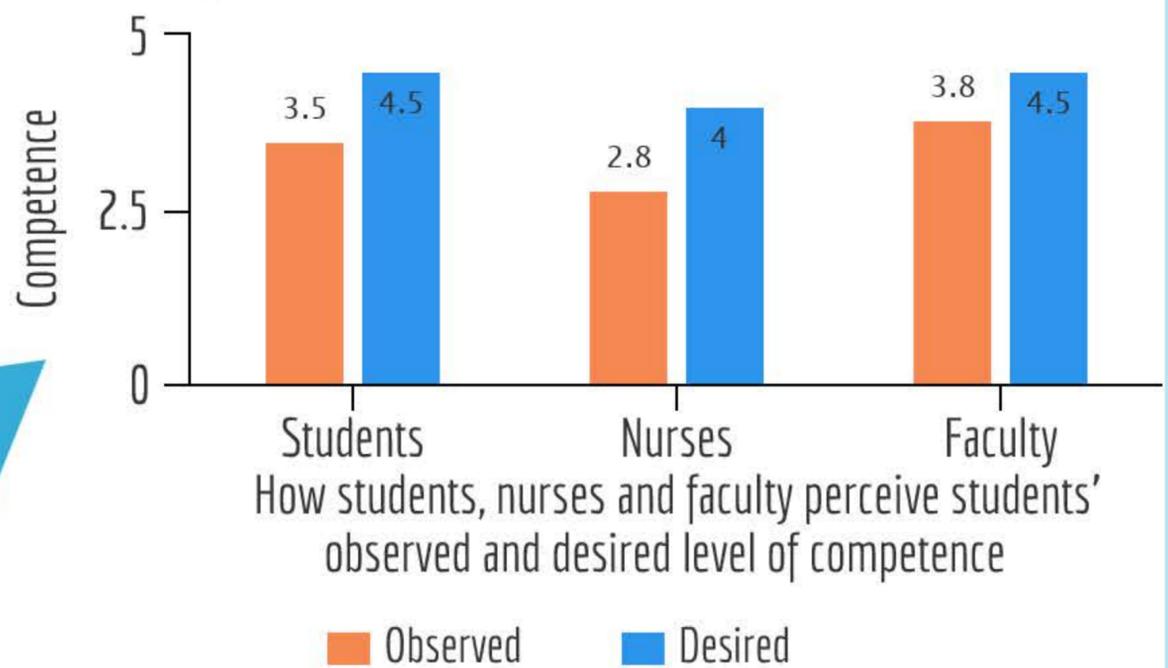
# Development of Undergraduate Nursing Student Competence in COMMUNITY HEALTH CLINICAL

To what degree are nursing students being prepared for community health nursing practice through their community health clinical rotations?

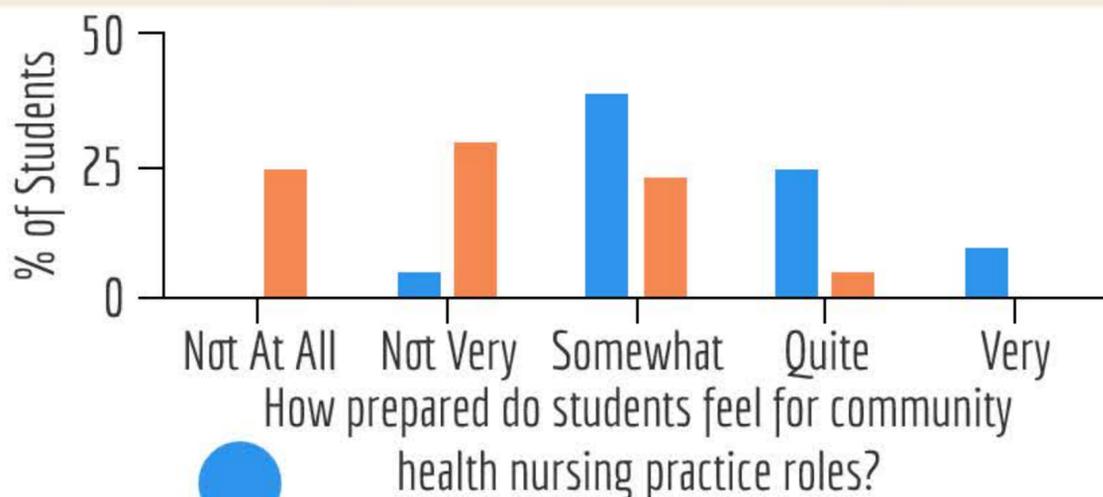
In an Alberta-wide study asking senior nursing students, community health nurses, and community health faculty to rate the observed and desired competence level of senior nursing students,

**observed competence scores were significantly lower than desired scores on all 43 competencies.**

## Perspectives of Student Competence in Community Health



Students who were preceptored in their community health clinical experience felt significantly more prepared for community health roles than those who experienced non-traditional clinical placements.



■ Preceptored  
■ Non-Traditional (Project)

Respondent groups (nurses, faculty and students) each have different beliefs about:

Readiness for Practice

Orientation to Learning

Foundations of Practice

Future of Practice

For more information, please see "Achievement of Community Health Nursing Competencies through Undergraduate Clinical Experiences: A Gap Analysis" by Em M. Pijl-Zieber (2015)

# Development of Undergraduate Nursing Student Competence in COMMUNITY HEALTH CLINICAL

Once the gap emerged in the quantitative data, the nature of the gap between observed and desired competence level of senior nursing students and new graduates in community health areas was explored through focus group interviews with senior nursing students, community health faculty, and community health nurses across Alberta. Practicing community health nurses, faculty and students have different views on:

- Readiness to practice
- Foundations of community nursing practice
- The role of critical thinking
- Orientation to learning
- The future of nursing practice

Two student (n=12) and two faculty (n=11) focus groups occurred at two baccalaureate schools of nursing in two Alberta Health Services zones and at a public health (n=7) and a home care (n=10) office in one Alberta Health Services zone.



## STUDENTS

## NURSES

## FACULTY

### READINESS TO PRACTICE ENTAILS....

Being in possession of basic nursing knowledge and skills

Being in possession of basic nursing knowledge and skills to enable meaningful interaction with patient

Having a strong theoretical foundation, and critical thinking skills and being able to learn on the job

### FOUNDATIONS OF COMMUNITY NURSING PRACTICE ARE....

Basic nursing knowledge and skills for daily work of nurses

Assessment, pathophysiology, pharmacology, epidemiology, and interpersonal skills

Standards of practice, competency frameworks, determinants of health, and population health

### THE ROLE OF CRITICAL THINKING IS...

Subservient to skill and knowledge acquisition

Part of a trinity that includes the competent application of skills and knowledge in new situations

A skill to help graduates extrapolate to new skills and knowledge

### ORIENTATION TO LEARNING IS PRIMARILY....

Concrete and focused on how to 'do'; emphasis on maximizing exposure to multiple nursing roles

Integrative; the abstract meets the concrete in the patient encounter; desire that students have an authentic exposure to community practice

Abstract and focused on teaching students how to 'be'; emphasis on deep conceptual learning that can be applied to multiple situations

### THE FUTURE OF NURSING PRACTICE IS....

In community but unable to specify what roles might look like

In community, with more of the existing roles (especially public health and home care)

In community, with new nursing roles, in a health care system that has not yet materialized

**THE WAY FORWARD...** Establish foundations of nursing practice ● Enhance communication between practice and academe ● Meet the common goals of students and practice areas through sound pedagogy and a variety of clinical experiences ● Evaluate ● Follow CASN guidelines for quality community placements (expanded version here: [http://scholar.ulethbridge.ca/em\\_pijlzieber/files/tips\\_for\\_teaching\\_ch\\_clinical\\_-\\_march30-2015.pdf](http://scholar.ulethbridge.ca/em_pijlzieber/files/tips_for_teaching_ch_clinical_-_march30-2015.pdf))