The 5 Rights of Clinical Reasoning: An Innovative Teaching and Learning Approach

**Background**
- Nurses with effective clinical reasoning skills have a positive impact on patient outcomes.
- Poor clinical reasoning skills can lead to adverse patient outcomes and a ‘failure to rescue’.
- Contemporary educational approaches do not always facilitate the development of nursing students’ clinical reasoning skills and innovative teaching and learning approaches are required.

**The 5 Rights of Clinical Reasoning**
Clinical Reasoning depends upon the ability to:
- collect the **right cues**
- for the **right patient**
- at the **right time**
- take the **right action**
- for the **right reason**

- **Right Cues** – acquisition / recall of the appropriate information for the situation.
- **Right Patient** – identification of clinically ‘at risk’ patients.
- **Right Time** – interventions are undertaken at the right time and in the right sequence.
- **Right Action** – the correct action / intervention is identified and undertaken.
- **Right Reason** – a structured clinical reasoning approach is used and actions are initiated for the correct reasons.

**Aim of the Project**
To develop nursing students’ clinical reasoning ability through their engagement with an interactive computerised decision support framework.

**Student Feedback:**
- “The scenarios maintained my interest and made me want to learn more.”
- “The scenarios provided a real situation that I could relate to.”
- “The scenarios developed my ability to solve problems and helped me to recognise the gaps in my knowledge.”
- “I feel more confident about managing complex clinical situations now”.  
  “I learned a lot … it was non-threatening as there was no failing and I could work at my own pace”

**Preliminary Findings**

**Computerised Decision Support Framework**
- Provides theoretical foundations to authentic patient situations.
- A sequential, ‘step-through’ approach requires students to make decisions at critical junctures.
- Immediate feedback on incorrect decisions is built into the framework; rationales and explanations are provided.
- Students have access to the best available evidence to support their decisions.
- Summative assessment includes reflective journaling.
- Tracking of students’ decision making provides a window into how nursing students transform theoretical knowledge into clinical decisions.

**Figure 1: The Clinical Reasoning Process**
**Figure 2: Screenshot of Decision Support Framework**

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