Clinical Flexibility: A Graduate-Clinician Focus Group
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Abstract
Clinical flexibility is a skill that is essential in a field that requires clinicians to provide individualized services, rather than applying cookbook approaches. A focus group, comprised of second-year graduate students, explored student learning preferences as they relate to prior knowledge, flexibility, and theoretical perspectives.

Aims & Methods
- **Aims:**
  - To identify prior learning experiences that influenced clinician-learner preferences.
  - To examine which teaching pedagogies scaffold flexible thinking.
  - To explore how student clinicians change throughout their academic careers to become skilled and flexible clinicians.

- **Participants:**
  - 8 second-year graduate students, at time of graduation
  - Invited to participate because they demonstrated a high level of disciplinary knowledge, clinical flexibility, & critical thinking

- **Methods:**
  - Qualitative Research Study: Focus group with discussion prompt
  - Data Analysis: Open and Axial Coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990)

Discussion Prompt:

**Methods**
- Qualitative Research Study: Focus group with discussion prompt
- Data Analysis: Open and Axial Coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990)

Discussion and Future Directions

**Discussion**
- Students affirmed that principal-based instruction → more flexible thinkers.
- Students affirmed that one needs a firm grasp on content knowledge before one can begin to be flexible.

**Future Directions**
- Explore in greater detail the transition from novice to expertise.
- Explore specific teaching pedagogies that scaffold clinical flexibility.
- Examine more deeply how students and clinicians change throughout their professional careers.

Selected References: For additional references, contact: mcdonamm@uwec.edu

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