



ERA+ Clinical Leadership in Nursing Education



Clinical Leadership in Nursing Education Inspirational good practice

“Challenge Your Talents”

This example shows practical leadership skills that are applied in educational settings. These practices were identified and collected during the Erasmus+ KA220-HED project “Clinical Leadership in Nursing Education,” co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union. The content is based on existing practices, with good examples submitted by project partners and stakeholders, recognized as validated examples from professional practice.

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1. Contact information

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2. Short description of the teaching method

Discover Challenge Your Talents: a unique learning experience where real healthcare challenges, teamwork and personal leadership come together. For five weeks, students step outside the traditional classroom and dive into a real-life case from the field. With coaching, inspiring workshops and close collaboration with the care partner (= provider of the real-life case), they build innovative, evidence-informed solutions that truly make an impact.

3. Why should colleagues use this method to strengthen clinical leadership?

How do we prepare students for real-life challenges?

Challenge Your Talents prepares students for the complex, fast-changing world of healthcare.

- We start from **real needs in the professional field**: authentic cases that healthcare providers recognise and that encourage students to move beyond theory. Through close collaboration with the care partner, real questions, dilemmas and teamwork become part of the programme.

- **High-impact teaming & personal leadership**

Students learn to contribute effectively within a team by developing personal leadership and high-impact teamwork skills. Workshops on mindset, constructive feedback, communication and collaboration help them apply theoretical insights directly through outdoor activities, experiential learning and practice-based tasks.

- **Entrepreneurial thinking & project approach**

To boost motivation and innovation, we work with [Vlajo](#) and experts from UCLL to offer workshops on project design, vision, quality-driven thinking and pitching. The goal is not to create entrepreneurs, but to spark entrepreneurial thinking and equip students with tools for creative problem-solving and project management.

4. Competencies related to clinical leadership

Primary competencies – secondary competencies addressed by this good practice.

Domain – ethics

Ethical competence (**ethical principles and values; professional integrity and accountability**)

Domain – professional nursing

Clinical competence (**clinical competence in specific clinical area; nursing process; health promotion**)

- ✓ Quality management competence (**quality of care; patient safety**)
- ✓ Evidence based practice competence (**evidence based practice**)
- ✓ Decision making competence (**critical thinking; decision making; problem solving**)
- Self-development competence (**continuous professional development**)

Domain – innovation and change

- ✓ **Visioning competence** (**future-oriented thinking; understanding the big picture; finding innovative approaches; questioning**)
- ✓ **Change management competence** (**initiating change; advocating change; implementing change**)

Domain – Influencing and advocacy

- ✓ Influencing competence (**influencing others; motivating others**)
- Patient advocacy competence (**patient advocacy**)

Domain – team leadership

- ✓ Team leadership competence (**team formation, team coordination, positive working atmosphere**)
- ✓ Team leadership competence (**team formation, team coordination, positive working atmosphere**)
- Guidance competence (**supervision, mentoring**)

Domain – communication and collaboration

- ✓ **Communication competence** (*effective communication, dialogical competence*)
- ✓ **Collaboration competence** (*interprofessional collaboration; professional collaboration*)

Specific behaviors practiced (besides the competences mentioned above):

- Pitching (of a project/idea)
- Project management
- (Project-) ownership
- Teamwork within an unfamiliar team

5. Timeline

Five weeks, one real challenge

For five weeks, teams of 5–6 students work intensely on a real-life challenge in the domain of care, quality or organisation. Students follow a five-week trajectory including a kick-off, outdoor team-building, workshops, coaching sessions, and a final pitch presentation.

6. Student guidance

- Vlajo coaching on project management;
- Workshops offering tools for project management, quality-driven thinking, vision development, High Impact Teaming, and pitching;
- Coaching by lecturers on High Impact Teaming;
- Formative feedback from Vlajo, care partner, lecturers on project (proces and product)
- Formative and summative self- and peer feedback.

7. Required materials / Conditions

- Platform with learning materials (e.g. Toledo) – collection of learning materials on High Impact Teaming, project management, etc.; Outdoor location for teambuilding day;
- Sufficient challenges from the work field (one challenge per two teams);
- Teams of 5–6 students, each with an individual coach for the 5 weeks;
- Classrooms for workshops and the final pitch.

8. Evaluation / Follow-up

- **Group assignment:** students submit a written team assignment on their challenge and proposed solution (weighting: written report 60%, pitch 40%). The report is assessed by a coach who is not the team's process coach. The pitch is assessed by a jury (same coach, Vlajo, and care partner).
- **Individual grade:** Peer assessment results in a factor that is multiplied with the team score to obtain each student's individual grade.
- **The care partner** receives the whole product for (potential) further implementation in the workplace.

9. Results / effects on students

A solution with real impact

- Each team develops an **evidence-informed and usable solution** that the care partner can continue working with. The trajectory ends with a pitch to a jury of educators and experts.
- **Strengthens student's competencies:** (personal) leadership, reflection, teamwork, communication; reinforces competencies linked to care innovation, quality thinking, and project management.

96% of participants indicate that they are satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the course (UCLL, studentenbevraging 2025-2026 semester 1, N=48). Or in the words of our students:

“It helps you broaden your perspective and think in an innovative and entrepreneurial way by developing a solution for a challenge from the sector you will work in later. Quite a challenge!”

“This really stimulated my personal leadership. It also made me motivated to pursue the master’s program. So I definitely think this is an element that should be kept.”

“In terms of content it was highly valuable, not only for the challenge but certainly also for personal life.”

“Working on the challenge in a group with people you don’t know very well. It pushes you to work in a team and to identify each other’s strengths and apply them in the group work.”

“I take away how enjoyable it can be to learn to work together. You learn to motivate each other and grow!”

“You become more familiar with other aspects of healthcare and the focus on quality care.”

10. Tips for colleagues

- Look for a good balance between mandatory moments and moments of choice for the teams (team autonomy).
- Use a coaching framework as a basis (e.g. High Impact Teaming-model);
- Ensure challenges that are linked to health care, are realistic and feasible in 5 weeks.
- Include an external jury for objectivity in assessment (not the process-coach from the team).
- Maintain a good understanding of the content of the workshops provided in order to be able to follow the process properly.
- Think about the best way to handle intellectual property in this context (Where do the ownership-rights for the finished product lay?)

11. Practical example / anecdote

“Do you apply clinical reasoning?” and Box of brains (2 games to promote/facilitate clinical reasoning in nursing internships)



Sharpie (tool to prevent needlestick injuries)



(<https://www.ucll.be/nl/uitgelicht/prikongevallen-het-ziekenhuis-studenten-verpleegkunde-vinden-de-ideale-oplossing>)

Wishing tree box (toolbox for discussing end-of-life issues)



(<https://www.ucll.be/nl/wishing-tree-box-praten-over-het-levenseinde>)