



Exploring Addiction Education in BSN Programs

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Objectives

- Identify gaps related to Substance Use Disorders (SUD) in nursing curriculum development.
- Identify faculty who are SUD content experts
- Raise awareness of the need for more SUD nursing education, including prevention & treatment.
- Decrease stigma and ambivalence of nursing students caring for patients diagnosed with a SUD.

Background

As early as the late 1980's, there has been an urgent need for substance abuse education in Bachelors of Science in Nursing programs (BSN). Stigma and insufficient training for addressing substance use disorders (SUD) in clinical settings are two significant barriers to early identification and access to care for patients with SUD related problems. Current nursing curricula continues to be inadequate and inconsistent. BSN programs across the United States have been slow to add critical content related to SUD and nursing curricula lack education on the prevention and treatment of SUD. Faculty of several nursing programs in Maryland have expressed frustration with the inability to add SUD content in related courses to an already abundant academic curriculum. Many nurses are ambivalent about treating patients with a SUD and report a lack of training as the reason for this ambivalence. The prevalence of patients with a SUD has become a national crisis, it is imperative that the issue surrounding the lack of education for nursing students be addressed.

Method

- Literature review of relevant content
- Qualitative interviews with Psychiatric Nurse Educators
- Analysis of findings



Discussion

- Lack of education identified 30 years ago
- Bias and ambivalence of health care professionals
- Maximum of NCLEX psychosocial tested content is 12 percent
- Simulation and case study
 - Literature shows that undergraduate nursing student's prefer actual discussions and interactions when developing skills such as therapeutic communication when working with substance abuse patients (Lewis & Jarvis, 2019).



Recommendations

- **Develop nursing student awareness of treatment while patient is in SUD withdraw**
- **Increase hours and type of nursing education related to Substance abuse disorder (SUD) through:**
 - **Lecture**
 - **Simulation**
 - **Clinical**
- **Provide opportunities for faculty development related to SUD nursing care and nursing education.**
- **Faculty teaching SUD content need to have expert understanding of the issues.**
- **There is value to adding alcohol or drug (AOD) curriculum to undergraduate's community/public health nursing clinical practicum as it helps to develop nursing student's preparation in addressing AOD in the clinical setting (Nash, et al., 2017).**

Conclusion

BSN programs should explore increasing the curriculum surrounding substance use disorders. Nursing programs need to use more SUD content expert faculty to teach nursing strategies when caring for these patients. Their professional development related to SUD will improve the nursing student learning process. With the increased education and training the goal is to decrease the anxiety, bias, and ambivalence of nursing students when working with SUD patients.

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