

Senior Nursing Students' Knowledge, Attitudes and Confidence with End-of-Life Care

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Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine if there were differences in senior nursing students' knowledge, attitudes and confidence about end-of-life care based on placement of information in the curriculum.

Research Questions

- What are the perceived knowledge, attitudes and confidence about end-of-life care of senior nursing students' who participate in a curriculum that offers course content in end-of-life care based on when the information is provided in the curriculum?
- Is there a significant relationship among knowledge, attitudes and confidence about end-of-life care in senior nursing students' who receive end-of-life care information?

Methodology

- Knowledge, Attitudinal, Experiential Survey on Advance Directives (KAESAD) survey.
- Accredited bachelor of science in nursing programs
- Two groups. Group one received end-of-life care information in the junior year and group two received the information in the senior year of their nursing programs.

Results

Students Overall Scores on Knowledge, Attitudes, and Confidence with Advance Directives and End-of-Life Decision Making

| | Content in Junior year (n=116) | Content in Senior year (n=15) |
|---|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Average knowledge of advance directives, Patient Self-Determination Act of 1990, and Illinois law | | |
| Mean | 52 | 59 |
| SD | 11 | 8 |
| Average attitude regarding end-of-life decision making | | |
| Mean | 30 | 33 |
| SD | 7.4 | 6.9 |
| Average level of confidence with advance directives | | |
| Mean | 29.22 | 35.73 |
| SD | 7.8 | 11.4 |



Results (continued)

Student nurses identified what is needed to increase their ability to assist patients with advance directives before graduation.

"We only briefly talked about them Taking this survey made me realize how little I know about advance directives."

"I am not sure what my responsibilities and role is with helping patients with advance directives."

"Time is spent talking about the definition and meaning of advance directives rather than how to use them and patient teaching."

"The whole state law thing, I had no idea about."

"A simulation about this would be great."

Conclusion

- The year during which students are taught end-of-life care education is an important factor in determining knowledge and confidence. Both groups (content taught in junior year, and senior year) scored poorly on the knowledge portion of the survey.
- Students who reported higher levels of knowledge also held higher attitudes about end-of-life care

Implications for Future Research

More exploration about what end-of-life care information is being taught, and the time spent on the information in curriculums needs to be done.



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