Continuing education for Registered Nurses working in psychiatry and mental health

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Background

The literature highlights the negative perceptions, lack of essential communication, and lack of skills in nurses who care for the mentally ill population. Not all Schools of Nursing offer mental health courses and as such, some nurses working in psychiatry and mental health lack the knowledge and clinical skills necessary to provide comprehensive care to persons with mental illness. With an increasing demand for effective and accessible mental health care, nurses working in these settings can benefit from recognizing gaps in their knowledge and continuing their education.

This systematic review of 14 studies, including data summary tables and critical appraisal using the Joanna Briggs Institute critical appraisal tools, will aim to identify an education intervention that can assist hospitals and registered nurses in improving their competency of care for patients with mental illness.

Objective/Aim

To review and analyze data extracted from studies that evaluate interventions to increase knowledge and clinical skills of nurses in psychiatry and mental health settings.

Methodology

1. Data aggregation
2. Critical appraisal of the studies

1. Data aggregation

From completed data extraction documents, the data from 14 studies was organized into tables using Microsoft Word. This was done to enhance efficiency when making comparisons and to standardize the information. The following tables were included: Characteristics of Included Studies, Intervention Characteristics, and Summary of Quantitative Results. Figure 1 features a sample from the ‘Characteristics of Included Studies Table’.

2. Critical appraisal of the studies

The Joanna Briggs Institute Critical Appraisal Tools for quasi-experimental studies, qualitative studies, and randomized controlled trials were used to conduct quality appraisals of the 14 studies. Through quality appraisal of each individual study, the study validity, usefulness, and potential for bias can be assessed. The appraisals also help identify the relevancy of the study to the broader systematic review. Two reviewers assessed each study separately with the corresponding checklist, depending on the study’s design. Figure 2 shows the checklist for one of the studies, completed using the JBI model.

Results

No formal results have been found. The data summary tables have been compiled and are currently being edited to optimize comparisons. The 14 critical appraisals will be examined as a group to discuss inclusion comments and relevancy to the systematic review. The steps done thus far are preliminary work in the process and the objective for the systematic review is attainable.

Conclusions

The systematic review, which is in the process of being completed, will eventually be used to identify the most effective ways to provide continuing education to mental health nurses. This information will be summarized and educators in the mental health field may choose the most appropriate and evidence-based strategies for their staff. The overall aim will be to improve nursing care received by persons with mental health concerns.

References


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