

Continuing education for Registered Nurses working in psychiatry and mental health

Jenna Smith, 3rd year nursing student, under the supervision of Amanda Vandyk, RN, PhD
Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Ottawa

Background

The literature highlights the negative perceptions, lack of essential communication, and lack of skills in nurses who care for the mentally ill population¹. 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'.

Methodology

Study ID	Authorship	Date	Country	Sample (N)	Mental Health Setting	Theoretical Framework	Design (Data Collection)	Intervention	Objective
1	Lamont, Brunero, & Russell	2010	Australia	n = 6 Nurses: non specified	Hospital	Action Learning Theory	Mixed: Post Only + Generic Qualitative • Questionnaire: Action Learning Set Evaluation • Qualitative questionnaire comments	Action Learning Set	Enhance the delivery of mental health care
2	Redhead, Bradshaw, Braynion, & Doyle	2011	England	n = 42 Nurses: 21 Qualified, 21 Unqualified	Hospital Low secure units	University of Manchester Psychosocial Intervention (guides education, intervention and evaluation)	RCT Questionnaires Care Plan Audit	Small group Seminars (Including: Clinical application and observation)	Improve knowledge, attitudes and decrease levels of burnout for nurses working in a mental health unit

Figure 1

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.

THE JOANNA BRIGGS INSTITUTE
JBI Critical Appraisal Checklist for Randomized Controlled Trials
Reviewer: Jenna A. Adams Date: 17-02-2017
Author: White* questionnaire inclusion Year: 2010 Record Number: 5/13
Yes No Unclear NA
1. Was true randomization used for assignment of participants to treatment groups?
2. Was allocation to treatment groups concealed?
3. Were treatment groups similar at the baseline?
4. Were participants blind to treatment assignment?
5. Were those delivering treatment blind to treatment assignment?
6. Were outcomes assessors blind to treatment assignment?
7. Were treatments groups treated identically other than the intervention of interest?
8. Was follow-up complete, and if not, were strategies to address incomplete follow-up utilized?
9. Were participants analysed in the groups to which they were randomized?
10. Were outcomes measured in the same way for treatment groups?
11. Were outcomes measured in a reliable way?
12. Was appropriate statistical analysis used?
13. Was the trial design appropriate, and any deviations from the standard RCT design (individual randomisation, parallel groups) accounted for in the conduct and analysis of the trial?
Overall appraisal: Include Exclude Seek further info
Comments (including reason for exclusion)
1. Procedure for randomization not explained.
2. No detail provided.
3. The level of detail expected as per JBI instructions is not offered.
4. For discussion: Do we consider that the participants know they are or aren't receiving the intervention as a No or 'NA' given the nature of an education intervention.
5. No information.
12. No information on data analysis provided.
© Joanna Briggs Institute 2016 Critical Appraisal Checklist for Randomized Controlled Trials 3

Figure 2

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

1. Alexander V, Ellis H, Barrett B. Medical-surgical nurses' perceptions of psychiatric patients: A review of the literature with clinical and practice applications. *Archives of Psychiatric Nursing*. 2016; 30(2): 262-270.

Contact information

Email: jsmit242@uottawa.ca

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the University of Ottawa and the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program for the chance to work on this project and for the funding contributed. A special thank you to Amanda Vandyk for supervising this project and for all her support and assistance.