

THE STANDARD OF CARE OF STUDENT NURSES IN HOSPITAL PRACTICE – PATIENTS’ EVALUATION

POZIOM OPIEKI PIELĘGNIARSKIEJ ŚWIADCZONEJ PRZEZ STUDENTÓW PIELĘGNIARSTWA ODBYWAJĄCYCH ZAJĘCIA PRAKTYCZNE – OCENA PACJENTÓW

MARIOŁA WOJTAL^{A,C-F}

Nursing Faculty, Opole Medical School, Poland

TERESA NIECHWIADOWICZ-CZAPKA^{D-F}

EWA RADWAŃSKA^{B,D-F}

ANNA KLIMCZYK^{B,E}

A – przygotowanie projektu badania | study design, **B** – zbieranie danych | data collection, **C** – analiza statystyczna | statistical analysis, **D** – interpretacja danych | interpretation of data, **E** – przygotowanie maszynopisu | manuscript preparation, **F** – opracowanie piśmiennictwa | literature review, **G** – pozyskanie funduszy | sourcing of funding

SUMMARY

Background: Conscious evaluation of nursing care through the experiences of the patient can be a valuable resource for creating an effective education system and a good criterion for its establishment. In order to improve the quality of nursing care, it is necessary to continually develop students’ knowledge and ensure they practice their professional skills.

Aim of the study: The aim of this study is to evaluate the standards of nursing practice among student nurses who participate in practical classes in hospital training centres.

Material and methods: The studies were performed on 190 patients hospitalized on medical and surgical wards in Opole. The research was based on a survey specifically prepared for this study. The respondents gave their answers using a numerical scale from 1 to 5 (1 = lowest rating, 5 = highest rating). Average student skill level data are presented as the arithmetic mean across all measures.

Results: Skilled nurse candidates are required to possess specific predispositions and an appropriate attitude, expected of professional ethics. The assessment of student behavior and ethical approach is highly significant (average appraisal: 4.98). Students who are present on wards have a positive influence on patient well-being (4.97). Assessment of behavior and respect for patient rights received an average score 4.94 and 4.95. Patients evaluated student communication skills (the manner in which important information is explained to patients) as low – 4.75; similarly, a lower score was given to the level of health education (4.73).

Conclusions: 1. Greater emphasis needs to be placed on the health education of student nurses. 2. The ability of student nurses to communicate with patients, on matters relating to treatment, requires further improvement.

KEYWORDS: patient, student, evaluation, nursing care standards

STRESZCZENIE

Wstęp: Świadoma ocena opieki pielęgniarskiej przez pryzmat doświadczeń człowieka chorego stanowi bardzo cenne źródło i kryterium jakości kształcenia. Podniesienie poziomu jakości świadczonej opieki pielęgniarskiej wymaga ciągłego pogłębiania wiedzy i doskonalenia umiejętności zawodowych.

Cel pracy: Ocena poziomu opieki pielęgniarskiej sprawowanej przez studentów pielęgniarstwa odbywających zajęcia praktyczne w placówkach szkoleniowych.

Materiał i metody: Badanie przeprowadzono metodą sondażu diagnostycznego wśród 190 pacjentów hospitalizowanych w oddziałach chorób wewnętrznych i chirurgii opolskich szpitali. Kwestionariusz ankiety opar-

cowano dla potrzeb pracy. Badani dokonali oceny w oparciu o skalę numeryczną 1–5. Liczba 1 oznaczała ocenę najniższą, liczba 5 – najwyższą. Z uzyskanych ocen obliczono średnią arytmetyczną w celu prezentacji średniej oceny umiejętności studentów.

Wyniki: Od kandydatów do zawodu pielęgniarstwa wymagamy ściśle określonych predyspozycji oraz postawy zgodnej z wartościami etyki zawodowej, dlatego bardzo znamienny jest wynik badania w postaci najwyższej oceny kultury osobistej i etycznej postawy studentów (średnia ocen 4,98). Obecność studentów na oddziale skutkuje dobrym wpływem na samopoczucie chorych (4,97), a zachowanie się studentów na oddziale i przestrzeganie praw pacjenta uzyskały średnią ocen 4,94 i 4,95. Najniżej pacjenci ocenili kompetencje studentów związane z komunikacją (sposób przekazywania ważnych informacji chorym – 4,75) i edukację zdrowotną (4,73).

Wnioski: 1. Należy położyć większy nacisk na kształcenie umiejętności prowadzenia przez studentów edukacji zdrowotnej. 2. Umiejętności studentów w zakresie komunikacji terapeutycznej z pacjentami wymagają ciągłego kształtowania oraz doskonalenia.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE: pacjent, student, ocena, poziom opieki

BACKGROUND

Increasing the quality level of nursing care requires continuous improvement of knowledge and professional skills. In order to achieve the best results in this field it is necessary to start with nursing education. Conscious evaluation of nursing care, through the prism of the patient's experiences, is a very valuable source and a measure of the quality of education [1]. A patient is the best informant and insightful observer who remembers many details, reactions and behaviours they encounter while staying in contact with medical staff, including nursing students undergoing practical training. The level of nursing care and its assessment is related to students' responsibilities, self-control and self-improvement [1]. Nowadays, a patient actively participates in the treatment process, has a good knowledge of health and makes informed decisions about their treatment [2]. Systematic evaluation by patients of the level of nursing care provided by the students gives an opportunity to improve the effectiveness of education, which has a direct impact on the future of improving the quality of medical services, provided in health care facilities. Nursing care directed at a patient requires a nurse/student to perform a large set of specific activities [3]. These include instrumental and caregiving ones that play a leading role in the nursing treatments, which is to be understood as a sequence of logically and temporally related actions undertaken and performed by a nurse in the health or illness of individuals and entire social groups [3].

AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to assess the level of nursing care provided by nursing students undergoing practical training in training facilities.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The study was carried out from November to December 2016, among 190 male and female patients, aged 25–75, hospitalized in the wards of internal medicine and surgery in Opole, where the students of the

Department of Nursing of the Public Higher Medical Professional School in Opole carried out their practical training. For that reason, the approval of the bioethics committee was obtained. The conditions to include a patient in the study were: the patient's informed consent to participate in the study, preserved logical verbal contact and provision of nursing care for the patient by the students. A diagnostic questionnaire was developed for the needs of this study. The evaluations of the level of nursing care, which was provided by the students, was carried out using a numerical scale of 1–5, where number 1 was the lowest rating, whereas number 5 was the highest.

The patients expressed their evaluation in the following areas:

- Effectiveness of nursing treatments (toilet, making beds, changing bed linen, feeding, etc.).
- Patient's preparation for nursing, diagnostic and therapeutic treatments, the way of communicating important information to the sick,
- Efficiency of performing diagnostic and therapeutic treatments (e.g. blood sampling, setting an intravenous injection, drug administration, etc.).
- Interest in the needs of the patient, devotion of time and attention to the patient,
- Behaviour of students in the ward,
- Health education about the patient's lifestyle (nutrition, physical activity, stimulants, etc.)
- The impact of the students' presence on patient well-being,
- Students' personal culture and their ethical attitudes,
- Students' respect for patient rights.

From the obtained results an arithmetic mean was calculated in order to present the average scores in these individual areas.

RESULTS

Patients appreciate a very high level of nursing care provided by students pursuing practical classes in training facilities; the average rating is 4.88. The results

of evaluation of the effectiveness of nursing activities (toilet, making beds, changing bed linen, feeding, etc.), diagnostic and therapeutic activities (blood sampling, setting an intravenous injection, administration of medication, etc.) and preparation of a patient for nursing, diagnostic and therapeutic activities is presented in Tab. 1.

Fig. 1 shows the average rating of the efficiency of nursing students in performing medical treatments at the level of their undergraduate training in the evaluation of patients

The result of the study, in terms of the highest rating concerning personal culture and ethical attitudes of students, is very significant: 186 patients (97.89%) rated is as very good and 4 (2.11%) rated is as good; the average rating was 4.98.

The presence of students in the ward has a very positive effect on the well-being of patients during hospitalization: 184 patients (96.84%) rated this influence as very good and 6 (3.16%) rated it as good; the average rating in this area was 4.97.

The patients also very highly rated the respect for patient rights and the behaviour of students in the ward; the breakdown of ratings is shown in Tab. 2 and the mean in Fig. 2.

The patients evaluated the students’ competences related to communication and health education as the lowest. A method of conveying important information to the patient was assessed as very good by 161 people (84.74%), 23 rated it as good (12.1%) and 6 as satisfactory (3.16%). Health education concerning lifestyle (nutrition, physical activity, stimulants, etc.) was assessed as very good by 158 patients (83.16%), 23 rated it as good (12.1%), while 5 rated it as satisfactory (2.6%), and 4 as mediocre (2.11%). The average ratings in these areas are shown in Fig. 3.

DISCUSSION

Nursing students undergoing practice and work placements in hospital wards are part of the therapeutic team, understood as a group of people with different

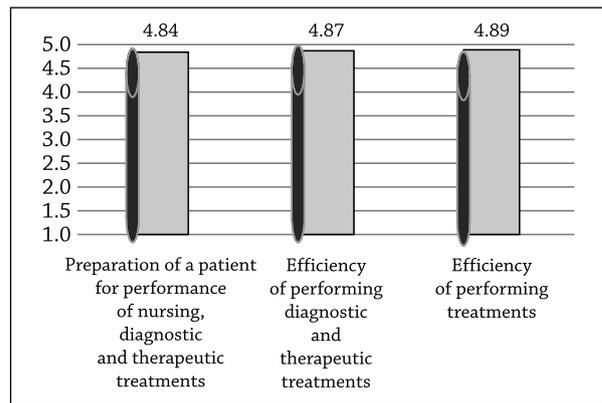


Figure 1. Opinions on the effectiveness of the procedure and the preparation of a patient for their performance

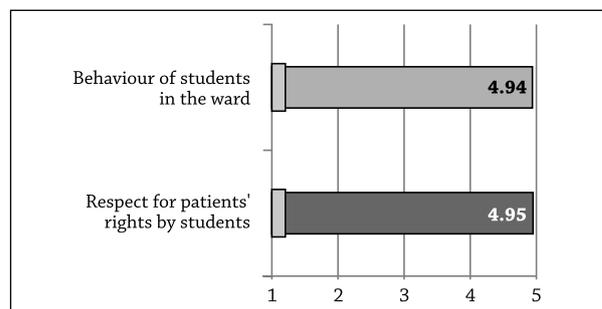


Figure 2. Patients’ opinions regarding the respect for patients’ right and behaviour of students in a ward

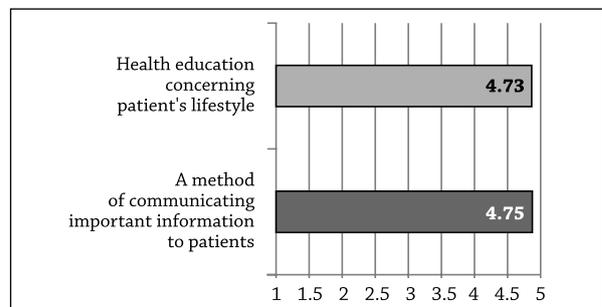


Figure 3. A method of communicating important information to the sick and health education about lifestyle

Table 1. Rating distribution of the efficiency of care treatments and the preparation of a patient to perform them

No.	Scope of rating	Rating									
		5		4		3		2		1	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1.	Efficiency of nursing treatments	175	92.10	13	6.84	1	0.53	1	0.53	0	0
2.	Efficiency of performing diagnostic and therapeutic treatments	171	90.00	14	7.37	4	2.10	1	0.53	0	0
3.	Preparation of a patient to the treatments	169	88.95	17	8.95	3	1.57	1	0.53	0	0

Table 2. Distribution of ratings regarding the respect for patients’ rights and behaviour of students in the ward

No.	Scope of rating	Rating									
		5		4		3		2		1	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1.	Respect for patients’ rights by students	180	94.74	9	4.73	1	0.53	0	0	0	0
2.	Behaviour of students in the ward	179	94.21	11	5.79	0	0	0	0	0	0

professional background who provide diagnostic, therapeutic and facilitating services to patients. The study on the evaluation of the level of nursing care provided by nursing students during practical training has not yet been carried out by other medical schools.

Nursing skills are initially taught in simulated situations (professional skills labs), the next stage is the natural environment (practical classes and work placements in medical institutions). The condition for shaping a given skill is a multiple of repetition, consistent with the rules and procedures. Efficiency in the performance of a given activity depends on one's professional experience determined by job seniority. The obtained results of the conducted study indicate a high evaluation of the efficiency of the students performing nursing, diagnostic and therapeutic treatments. Similar results were obtained in a study conducted by the students of Public Higher Medical Professional School in Opole in 2010, where 92% of respondents were satisfied with the nursing care provided by the students and the treatments that they performed, while only 8% expected that "it could be better" [4].

A nursing profession requires specific predispositions and character traits, attitudes and behaviour consistent with the values of professional ethics. Students of this profession, learn how to care for patients, help and support them. They try to do their jobs with the utmost accuracy and care. In everyday practice, they meet with both patients' praise and gratitude, but also with their lack of trust. The necessity of hospitalizing a patient confronts medical staff with many specific tasks related to the provision of a hospital environment, which is hospitable and conductive, and at the same time minimizes the inconvenience and the consequences of separation from the home environment. Hospitalization, especially the prospect of surgery, is a difficult situation for most people. Loss of self-reliance and dependence on strangers, lack of contact with the family, staying with other patients, being embarrassed by medical treatments performed by people, often much younger than the patient, the accompanying pain and other ailments, it all results in experiencing a sense of danger by a patient. According to Grochans and the team, Polish patients expect a nurse to be "an angel of goodness" [5] and according to Nowicki, a common image of a nurse and a midwife is that they accompany each of us from birth to death. The results obtained in 2010 confirmed this image with respect for prospective nurses. Patients believed that a trainee student should be: "a good Samaritan", "open to human suffering", "of gentle character, sensing patient's needs", "kind to the suffering person". In addition, other qualities such as caring, patience, understanding and composure are also desirable. Present results also point to patients' high expectations of students to be interested in their needs, pay attention to them and spend time with them. The impact of students' presence on the well-being of patients and their personal culture is evaluated positively. Similar results were

obtained in 2010, when most of the surveyed patients were satisfied with the presence of students in the ward and found the trainees to be very nice, attentive and respectful [4].

In the course of preparation for a nursing profession, it is necessary to have both theoretical and practical background in this field. The Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education, on the content and effects of education in the field of philosophy and ethics of a nursing profession for a major in nursing, draws attention to student's skills and competences, among others, the ability to identify basic ethical values and the use of the principles of the Code of Ethics, thus respecting patient's rights in a clinical practice. In addition to theoretical preparation, students should be taught about appropriate behaviour and respect for patient's rights, especially during their practical training and work placement, while observing the behaviour of their teachers and all the people involved in the treatment of a patient. Medical practitioners are required to respect patient's autonomy and dignity, which is protected by patients' rights under the Patient Rights Act and Patient Rights Advocate of November 6, 2008.

Respecting the dignity of a patient is expressed, inter alia, in the protection of their privacy and having respect for a patient's consent (or refusal) for the actions which are undertaken towards them. [7]. The consent (or refusal) can be expressed by a patient in various forms. Most often it is written or a casual one i.e. oral or implicit. The implicit form can be expressed by gesture e.g. a nod of the head [8,9].

Observing patient rights is a prerequisite for proper nursing care and treatment.

Patients do not always know the skills of the trainees, so sometimes their fears are not expressed directly, and at times they refuse to grant permission for a surgery performed by a student, because they are "still young and inexperienced people." However, the vast majority of respondents in 2010 were willing to undergo student-cantered procedures ("everyone must learn") and were not afraid of them, provided the student performed the treatment under the supervision of experienced nurses [4]. Similar results were obtained in the current study by Olejniczak et al., in which most of the students respected the patient's right to confidentiality and autonomy, while observing the patient's right to respect his or her dignity indicate an urgent need to pay attention to this problem [10]. Our results in this area are highly satisfactory. A similar study by Tawaj et al. among nurses and midwives shows that the vast majority of respondents (93.0%) inform patients about the planned treatments and perform them only if they receive their consent [7]. Patients rated the student's ability to conduct trainings on health education as the lowest. Monika Bińkowska-Bury et al. in their studies prove that health promotion and preventive activities require greater dissemination, not only among students but also among medical staff [11]. According to many specialists a conversation with

a patient about obesity and physical activity can be of great health benefit [11].

One of the limitations of this study is obtaining consent from hospitals and patients to complete the questionnaire, but it will be continued as a result of changes in nursing education standards and patient expectations towards this occupational group and their satisfaction with nursing care.

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Correspondence address:

mgr Anna Klimczyk
Państwowa Medyczna Wyższa Szkoła Zawodowa w Opolu
ul. Katowicka 68, 45-060 Opole
Phone: (+48) 784 784 125
E-mail: annazaleszczuk-klimczyk@wp.pl

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