Turning Millennial Students Into Geriatric Nurses

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Purpose

There is a growing population of geriatric clients in the health care setting, while interest in the specialty is minimal with only 1% of Registered Nurses being certified in geriatrics. (Heise, et al, 2012) There is a need to increase knowledge and interest in geriatric nursing to the new graduate population of nurses entering the profession as it is estimated that 20% of the population will be over 65 by 2030. Curriculum change and positive geriatric clinical experiences would improve the perspective of geriatric care to new graduate nurses.

Methods

- Survey student perception of geriatrics at the start of nursing school and upon graduation looking for change.
- With education of each disease process, add in how it may present or be treated differently in a geriatric client.
- Provide meaningful clinical experiences with the geriatric population in both acute care and community settings. Geriatrics is much more than nursing homes.
- Demonstrate that the geriatric population is a widely variable population that is still highly functional and independent.
- Make death a safe and positive conversation as well as including that it is not a geriatric only event.
- Exposure to leadership roles outside the acute setting for geriatric clinicians.

Results/Conclusion

Results:

This is new research to promote a curriculum change with more of a positive geriatric focus. My hope is to change the interest in geriatric nursing by introducing it sooner to nursing students as a specialty and allowing for positive clinical experiences to enhance the desire to go into geriatrics upon graduation.

Conclusion:

The perception of the geriatric population must be improved as this age group is rapidly growing in numbers. It can be a rewarding career choice for any nurse and by encouraging more new graduates to move into this specialty, they can make a big impact on the quality of care the baby boomer generation (born 1946-1964) receives.

References


Sigma Beta Beta Dallas Chapter