My Patient Died: Nursing Students Perceptions After Experiencing a Patient Death

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Demographics

• Gender
  – Women 92%

• Ethnicity
  – White 77%
  – Asian 7%
  – Hispanic 7%
  – African American 5%
  – Other 4%

• Marital Status
  – Single 69%
  – Married 30%
  – Widowed 1%

• Age
  – Millennials 70%
  – GenXrs 25%
  – Boomers 5%
Prevalence

As a Nursing Student: Have you ever been present (or close by) when a patient died?

No: 59%
Yes: 41%
After the patient death, did you receive debriefing?

- No 66%
- Yes 34%
Did you feel prepared to communicate:

• With the dying patient?
  – 29% prepared or very prepared
  – 71% less than prepared
Did you feel prepared to communicate:

• **With the family of the dying patient?**
  – 20% prepared or very prepared
  – 80% less than prepared
Did you feel prepared to communicate:

• With fellow healthcare team members?
  – 56% prepared
  – 44% less than prepared
Who, if anyone, prepared you to communicate:

• **With the dying patient?**
  – 22% Learned in Nursing Class
  – 19% Clinical Instructor
  – 59% Someone else (including No One: 42%)
Who, if anyone, prepared you to communicate:

- With the family of the dying patient?
  - 25% Nursing Class
  - 18% Clinical Instructor
  - 57% Someone else (Including No One: 37%)
Who, if anyone, prepared you to communicate:

- With fellow health care team members?
  - 22% Nursing Class
  - 22% Clinical Instructor
  - 56% Someone else (Including No One: 32%)
Did you feel prepared in the following areas at the time of the patient death?

- **Process of death and dying**
  - 55% prepared
  - 45% less than prepared

- **End-of-Life Care**
  - 44% prepared
  - 56% less than prepared

- **Ways to cope with a patient death**
  - 44% prepared
  - 56% less than prepared
Who, if anyone, prepared you in the:

- **Process of Death and Dying**
  - 36% Nursing Class
  - 21% Clinical Instructor
  - 43% Someone else (Including No One 15%)

- **End-of-Life Care**
  - 30% Nursing Class
  - 24% Clinical Instructor
  - 46% Someone else (Including No One 15%)
Who, if anyone prepared you in:

- **Ways to Cope**
  - 21% Nursing Class
  - 22% Clinical Instructor
  - 57% Someone else
    (Including No One 28%)
Conclusion

• Nursing students are not routinely debriefed after experiencing a patient death

• Students feel unprepared to communicate with dying patients and their families

• Students feel that they need more education on End-of-Life care
Conclusion

• Students feel that they need more education on interprofessional communication

• Nurse Educators, particularly clinical instructors, need to include debriefing strategies when working with nursing students who have experienced a patient death
Implications for Nursing Education

• How well are we preparing future nurses for End-of-Life care?

• As Nurse Educators, what improvements do we need to make?

• What education do we need to provide for our clinical faculty?
Debriefing

• Are we competent (or comfortable) with debriefing our students after a patient death?
References


Questions?