

**Title:**

Leading the Way for Nurses to Work with Autistic Patients

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**Session Title:**

Leading the Way for Nurses to Work with Autistic Patients

**Slot:**

LE 02: Saturday, September 27, 2014: 10:15 AM-11:00 AM

**Scheduled Time:**

10:15 AM

**Keywords:**

Autism and ASD, Education and Practice and Registered Nurses

**References:**

American Psychiatric Association. (2000). Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders (4th ed., text revision). Washington, DC. American Psychiatric Association. Center for Disease Control and Prevention. (2012). [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov). United States Census (US Census). (2012). Press Release: Disability: US Census Bureau Reports.

**Learning Activity:**

<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE</b>	<b>TIME ALLOTTED</b>	<b>FACULTY/SPEAKER</b>	<b>TEACHING/LEARNING METHOD</b>	<b>EVALUATION/FEEDBACK</b>
<b>Example</b> Critique selected definition of the term, "curriculum"	<b>Example</b> Definitions of "curriculum" Course of study Arrangements of instructional materials The subject	<b>Example</b> 20 minutes	<b>Example</b> Name, Credentials	<b>Example</b> Lecture PowerPoint presentation Participant feedback	<b>Example</b> Group discussion: What does cultural training mean to you?

	matter that is taught Cultural "training" Planned engagement of learners				
1. Identification of differences between communications between an individual with ASD and an individual without ASD.	Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Define ASD Provide difference in communication techniques with patients with ASD	10 minutes	Cynthia M Thomas, EdD, RNc Dr. Connie McIntosh, EdD, RN	Lecture, Power Point, Discussion and Participant Feedback	Group discussion
2. Implementation of nursing interventions to minimize self-injurious behaviors (e.g., head-butting and self-biting).	Provide 3 strategies to reduce self-injurious behaviors with the ASD patient	15 minutes	Cindy Thomas, EdD, RNc	Discussion, lecture	Group Discussion
3. Identification of nursing interventions to decrease	Identify and discuss nursing interventions to avoid or	15 minutes	Connie McIntosh EdD, RN and Roberta Allen, MA RN	Discussion, lecture	Group Discussion

noise reductions that lead to anxiety and meltdown behaviors in individuals with autism.	minimize adverse behaviors or injuries, reduce noise levels, lightening etc				
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**Abstract Text:**

**Purpose:**

Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) is a broad term encompassing a group of neurodevelopmental disabilities and the diagnosis of social communication disorder (SCD, DSM-V; APA, 2013). ASD prevalence continues to rise with one in sixty-four individuals diagnosed (CDC, 2014). Nearly twenty-five percent of Americans have a disability with nurses treating them in hospitals, clinics, and schools on a daily basis (US Census, 2012). While there has been much research about ASD, very few articles have been written about nursing interventions with a patient with ASD. How nurse's care for patients diagnosed with ASD compared to those without ASD can be different. For example, the persons with ASD is startled by voice inflections, can experience sensory disturbances including sensitivity to sounds, odors, and touches. Many nurses may not be familiar with administering medications commonly prescribed for co-morbid conditions often accompanying a diagnosis of ASD. Furthermore, the registered nurse- (RN) must be completely educated on the side effects and drug interactions between these medications because individuals with ASD- are often prescribed more than one medication.

**Methods:** This study explored nurses' knowledge of the diagnostic criteria and secondary conditions related to ASD, their involvement in the identification and treatment of ASD, their knowledge of medication used to treat ASD, and their overall medication management of children with ASD. Participants included 100 nurses, representing 18 states, who completed a survey on ASD using various types

**Results:** The majority of nurses were aware Autism and Asperger's Disorder should fall under the classification of ASD within the school setting. They were less sure on whether PDD-NOS should be included as an ASD. A high percentage indicated they received training in the area of ASD from self-study rather than from formal coursework or supervised clinical experiences. Results found limited involvement of nurses during the assessment and evaluation process. However, there was more involvement after children had been classified with an ASD, which was primarily limited to the administration of medication and medical treatments.

**Conclusion:** Future research should focus on specific medications administered to children with autism. With a plethora of medications available treating an assortment of co-morbidities, it is important for the nurses to stay abreast of current treatments. Specifically, future research should focus on how best to educate nurses on medication trends and on administering medication to children with autism would facilitate best practice. As children with a diagnosis of ASD mature into adulthood, nurses in all areas of practice must be knowledgeable of ASD, common medication ordered, strategies to prevent and deescalate a meltdown or negative behaviors, and how to maintain a safe environment.