Enhancing Mental Health Competencies in Advanced Practice Nursing Graduates
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Background

- 43 Million adults experience mental illness in a given year
- 1 in 5 adults in America experience a mental illness
- 20% of youth ages 13-18 live with a mental health condition
- 50% of lifetime cases of mental health begin by age 14 and 75% by age 24
  - NAMI 2016
Provider Shortages

• By 2025, shortages are projected for psychiatrists; clinical, counseling and school psychologists; mental health and substance abuse social workers; school counselors; and marriage and family therapists.

• In 2013, approximately 20 percent of the U.S. population reported having a behavioral health disorder, but did not receive treatment for mental illness and/or substance use disorder

  • HRSA 2016
Need for Mental Health Providers
Estimated Shortages in 2025

- Shortage of 6,080 FTE psychiatrists
  (12 percent of 2025 demand)

- Demand for psychiatrists exceeds supply by 15,400
  (25 percent of 2025 demand)
More Patients With Mental Illness Treated by Primary Care

What is our program teaching related to diagnosing and treating mental illness?
Are we missing some important and common diagnoses?
What additional knowledge do our students need?
How will the mental health curriculum be taught?
Common Mental Health Diagnosis

Most Frequently Diagnosed in Primary Healthcare

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Bipolar
- ADD/ADHD
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorders
Common Mental Health Medications

• Investigated the most common medications prescribed for mental health disorders
  ➢ SSRI
  ➢ SNRI
  ➢ Antianxiety medications
  ➢ ADHD medications
  ➢ Norepinephrine specific Reuptake inhibitors
  ➢ Mood stabilizers
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<th>Curriculum</th>
<th>Current Hours</th>
<th>Enhanced hours</th>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>Eating Disorders</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>10.5</strong></td>
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Mental Health Case Studies

- Content information presented in an online format.
- Case studies reviewed in a campus based format conducted by a Psychiatric Clinical Specialist
- Students integrate lecture/case study content into actual patient situations
Instrument Development

- Demographic information
- Mental health disorders
- Medications utilized for treatment of mental health disorders
Methodology

➢ IRB approval

➢ Students enrolled in the ANP/AGNP program

➢ Pretest/Posttest design
  - Beginning of summer courses (first year)
  - Prior to graduation
Results

• 43 AGNP Students Participated
  ➢ 39 female, 4 male
  ➢ 15 single, 23 married, 5 divorced
  ➢ 37 White, 4 Asian, 2 African American
Sample

➢ Age Range: 23-58  Mean Age: 30.02

➢ Mental Health Experience
  • N=26 (60%) reported no previous experience

➢ Years as RN
  • N=21 (49%) 10+ years of RN experience

➢ Personal Experience with Mental Health Disorders
  • N=17 (40%) YES  N=26 (60%) NO

➢ Seek Employment in Mental Health Settings
  • N=8 (19%) would seek employment in a mental health setting
Mental Health Conditions

![Graph showing mental health conditions with Pre-test and Post-test comparisons for Depression, Anxiety, OCD, ADD, Schizophrenia, Substance Abuse, and Eating Disorders.]
Medications

- SSRI
- SNRI
- Wellbutrin
- Atypical Antipsychotics
- Antianxiety medications
- ADHD Meds

Graph showing the comparison between pre-test and post-test for different medication categories.
Student Comments

• “I did not realize how many people with mental health disorders sought care in primary health care offices.”

• “I feel more confident to handle anxiety and depression even if it is not fully controlled with just one medication. I feel comfortable added another medication to compliment if necessary.”
Implications

➢ Enhance the confidence and competence of the AGNP in a primary care setting

➢ Increase access to care for those individuals experiencing mental health concerns.

➢ Impact mental health treatment with early intervention possibly averting more serious mental health conditions.

➢ Provide assistance to mentally ill patients in a primary care setting and avoid some of the stigma associated with mental illness.
Conclusion

• With the shortage of mental health providers, primary care providers are called upon to provide increasing mental health care services.

• Enhancing AGNP students’ exposure and experience in handling mental health concerns through the use of increased didactic material, progressive mental health case studies and clinical exposure led to an increase in perceived competence and confidence in the graduates ability to handle many common mental health concerns in a primary care setting.