Improving Nursing Students Knowledge and Attitudes Toward Mental Illness Using Standardized Patients

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This project was supported by a Maryland Higher Education Commission Nurse Support II grant under the auspices of HSCRC

The authors disclose no conflict of interest.
Session Objectives

• Discuss existing research on use of simulation in psychiatric mental health nursing.
• Describe research conducted to examine attitudes toward mental illness
• Recognize the effectiveness of using standardized patients experiences to improve nursing student knowledge of and attitudes towards individuals with mental illness.
Introduction

• Background

• Mental Illness and Stigma

• Psychiatric Mental Health Experience: Who, What, Where, When, How

• https://webapps.salisbury.edu/nursingtoolkit/
Does simulation using SPs have an impact on the student knowledge of and attitudes towards individuals with mental illness?
Method

- Design
- Setting
- Sample
Sample Demographics

Program Breakdown

- Traditional
  - Women: 60
  - Men: 8

- Second Degree
  - Women: 18
  - Men: 2
• MAKS Tool

• Student knowledge of and attitudes on varying aspects of mental health were assessed at the beginning and end of the semester using the 12-item mental health knowledge schedule (MAKS 10©) tool (Thornicroft, 2009).
Study Design

- Pre-test
- Simulations with standardized patients using toolkits
- Post-test
• SPSS

• Descriptive statistics

• Paired-samples t-test revealed a significant difference in overall MAKS 10 scores before simulations (M=46.95, SD=4.32) and after simulations (M=49.12, SD=3.05); t (64) = -4.05, p < 0.01.
• Paid employment

• Advice

• Medication

• Total
Discussion

- Experience with Standardized Patients increases knowledge and favorably influences attitudes towards individuals with mental illness.

- Using toolkits prior to Standardized Patient encounters provided consistent experiences for students.
Recommendations

Further research

– Continued exploration is needed

– What instructional methods can be best utilized
Limitations

• Small Sample Size

• Single Site Location

• No ability to infer causality

• Potential influence of other variables on pre/post scores

• Decrease in post test response rate
Key Points

• Simulation is beneficial in student learning and development of empathy

• There are limited resources in mental health clinical learning environments.

• Research in this area is scarce; additional studies needed


Thornicroft, G. (2009). *Mental Health Knowledge Schedule.* Health Service and Population Research Department, Institute of Psychiatry, King’s College London


