While in the psychiatric mental health clinical setting, associate degree nursing students (ADNS) have limited exposure to persons experiencing the full range of alterations in cognition of psychiatric illness. Lack of acute care clinical placements, and reduced dedicated psychiatric-mental health clinical hours nursing programs limited opportunities to interact with patients during acute episodes of illness. Yet psychosis, specifically the symptoms associated with acute cognitive distortions i.e. auditory hallucinations, is a common admitting diagnosis in the acute psychiatric care setting.

This qualitative study examines the experience reported by second semester ADNS after completing an auditory hallucinations simulation in the Nursing Skills and Simulation Lab at a community college in the mid-Atlantic. The lab is a required assignment for the course Nursing of Special Populations I: The Geriatric and Adult Psychiatric Patient. Students work in pairs with one as the patient wearing headphones listening to a recorded program simulating auditory hallucinations while the other student serves as the nurse trying to conduct a psychiatric assessment. After completing the first step of the simulation, the students switch roles and repeat the assignment. Students submitted a written report after completing the assignment. The reports included students’ personal reflections about the experience, identification of barriers to effective communication as the patient and as the nurse, and how the simulation altered knowledge, skills and attitudes about the patient with auditory hallucination. Responses were reviewed for conceptual and thematic content using the constant comparative analysis method of Corbin and Strauss (2008) to understand how ADNS experience this starkly realistic simulation of psychosis.

Findings include concepts and themes gleaned from students’ reports. Concepts identified included fear, distraction, frustration, empathy, patience and understanding. Themes included attitude changes from skepticism about auditory hallucinations to acceptance of symptoms, therapeutic use of self, and keeping patient safe.

Conclusions drawn from the study include that the auditory hallucinations assignment gives nursing students the opportunity to learn from a simulation experience about psychotic symptoms and assists in attaining knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for planning and providing care to patients with serious mental illness.
Abstract Summary:
This qualitative study examines the experience of second semester associate degree nursing students of an auditory hallucinations simulation. Students’ reflections about the experience addressed barriers to communication, nursing care of the patient with alterations in cognition, and how the simulation effected knowledge, skills and attitudes about patients with auditory hallucinations.

Content Outline:
Title
Hearing Voices: The Experience of Associate Degree Nursing Students of an Auditory Hallucinations Simulation

Background/Issue:
While in the psychiatric mental health clinical setting, associate degree nursing students (ADNS) may have limited exposure to persons experiencing the full range of cognitive distortions of psychiatric illness, particularly schizophrenia. Lack of acute care clinical placements, reduced dedicated psychiatric-mental health clinical hours in ADN programs result in limited opportunities to interact with patients during acute episodes of illness. Yet psychosis, specifically the symptoms associated with acute cognitive distortions i.e. auditory hallucinations, is a common admitting diagnosis in the acute psychiatric care setting.

Purpose:
The study aim is to understand how ADNS experience a high fidelity simulation of acute mental illness to enhance learning and provide care of the adult psychiatric patient.

The poster/podium presentation aims:
1. Identify two benefits of using an Auditory Hallucination Simulation (AHS) to advance ADNS learning of adult psychiatric pathology.
   a. Present AHS and debriefing tool.
b. Describe AHS assignment process.

2. Discuss two techniques of simulation that promote student learning of essential psychiatric mental health concepts.
   a. Illustrate high fidelity simulation method.
   b. Discuss role playing as a simulation method.

3. Describe how an AHS assignment enhances ADNS skill in assessing and planning care for the patient with acute psychotic symptoms.
   a. Review outcomes of qualitative analysis of student debriefing reports.
   b. Suggest applications to practice of AHS.

Presentation Methods:

1. Presentation of AHS and qualitative analysis findings.
   a. PPT
   b. AHS audio clip
   c. Debriefing tool

2. Discuss application of AHS to practice
   b. Discuss strategies to widen use of simulation techniques in nursing education and practice.

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Professional Experience: 2006-present: Professor, nursing program at Montgomery College, Silver Spring, MD. 1983-present: Advanced practice nurse with specialties in psychiatric nursing, psychotherapy, and psychopharmacology. She received her PhD in Nursing Science from the Catholic University of America, completing her dissertation with a qualitative study on weight loss surgery patients. Prof Stevens is a member of the American Psychiatric Nurses Association, The American Nurses Association, and Sigma Theta Tau, Kappa Chapter.

Author Summary: Sylvia Stevens has been a nursing educator for over 20 years and a practicing certified specialist in adult psychiatric mental health nursing specialist for 35 years. Her areas of expertise include psychotherapy, psychopharmacology, and NCLEX item writing and analysis. She received her PhD in Nursing Science from the Catholic University of America.