

Continuing Education Needs & Knowledge of Gerontological Nursing Among Nurses in Nursing Homes

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore continuing education needs and knowledge of gerontological nursing among nurses in nursing homes, and analyze the relationship of demographic characteristics, knowledge and continuing education needs. Twenty nursing homes were randomly selected and 130 nurses were interviewed by structured questionnaires to ascertain their demographic characteristics, knowledge of gerontological nursing, and continuing education needs. Results showed that more than half of the nurses had not attended any courses in gerontological nursing in school, or in post-graduate continuing education. The rate of correct answers for knowledge of gerontological nursing was 70.8%. The worst knowledge was of gerontological statistics, followed by physical and psychological aspects of aging. Knowledge levels in gerontological nursing were positively correlated with age ($r = .22, p < .05$) having taken gerontological nursing courses ($r = .22, p < .05$) and having taken continuing education in gerontological nursing ($r = .18, p < .05$). Knowledge levels were negatively correlated with having lived with the elders in their own family ($r = -.30, p < .05$). Nurses who graduated from junior college or nursing high school had lower scores for knowledge than college graduates ($F = 25.31, p < .001$). The intensity level of continuing education needs ranged from needed to strongly needed, especially for knowledge regarding clinical care, followed by general information on aging, and administration and management. The level of continuing education needs was not different among the various demographic characteristics and knowledge levels in gerontological nursing. Results from this study suggest that gerontological nursing courses should be increased in nursing schools. Furthermore, a well-formulated continuing education model for gerontological nurses in nursing homes is also essential to promote the quality of care of the elderly.

Key words: knowledge of gerontological nursing, continuing education needs, nursing home, nurses.

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