

End-of-Life Simulations & Nursing Students' Confidence

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Background and Significance

Nurses spend more time with critically ill and end-of-life (EOL) patients than any other healthcare professionals (Ferrell et al., 2016). As the population ages, nurses need to be prepared to care for patients with life-limiting illnesses and those at the EOL. Undergraduate nursing students are beginning professional practice with little confidence in caring for patients at the EOL, which can negatively impact patient care. Ferrell et al. (2016) emphasized the need to include EOL education in undergraduate nursing curricula to best prepare nursing students for future professional practice.

Methodology

Databases Used	Medline, CINAHL, PubMed, Cochrane, ERIC, Ancestry Search
Key words	End-of-life care, undergraduate nursing student, palliative care, simulation, confidence, terminal care, undergraduate nursing education, nurs*
Inclusion criteria	Published in the past 7 years, English Language
Articles	Retrieved: 38 Used: 8

PICO Question

In undergraduate nursing students, what is the effect of end-of-life simulation on students' confidence in providing end-of-life care?

Findings

The evidence reviewed supported the use of EOL simulation as having a positive impact on student confidence. Tamaki et al. (2019) found improved confidence among the EOL simulation group students for both, physical assessment ($p=0.00$) and psychological care ($p=0.00$). Using the Frommelt Attitudes toward Care of the Dying Scale (FATCOD), four studies reported significant increases in mean scores following simulations: Bryne et al. (2020) ($p=0.03$), Dame and Hoebeke (2016) ($p<0.001$), Kirkpatrick et al. (2020) ($p<0.001$), and Lewis (2016) ($p<0.001$). In literature reviews, Gillian et al. (2014) and Kirkpatrick et al. (2017) found that improved self-confidence and self-efficacy were outcomes of EOL simulations and Carman's (2014) case report indicated that EOL care simulation had an improved effect on students' confidence.



Nurse holding patient's hand. (Digital image). UPMC Heart Beat <https://share.upmc.com/2015/04/after-your-heart-surgery/>

Level and Quality of Evidence

The Johns Hopkins Nursing Evidence Based Practice Model

Level of Evidence	Quality	# of Articles Used
I	B	1
II	B	4
V	B	3

Strengths and Limitations

- Evidence consistent and compelling
- FATCOD construct validity and internal consistency demonstrated
- Small samples sizes
- Convenience sampling
- Limited generalizability of results
- Inconsistent validity and reliability of outcome measures
- Barriers of financial costs of simulations and qualification of trained nurse professors

Recommendations

- Further investigation with larger sample sizes
- More experimental studies that relate to the topic to increase internal validity
- Identification of a reliable, and valid tool to measure student's self confidence
- Pilot of EOL simulation experiences in undergraduate study programs

References

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