Using Standardized Patients to Improve Nursing Students’ Knowledge and Attitudes towards Mental Illness

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Session Objectives

• Identify components of a standardized patient experience.

• Recognize the effectiveness of using standardized patients experiences to improve student knowledge of and attitudes towards individuals with mental illness.
Introduction

- Who
- Why
- What
- Where
Research Question

• 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

Second Degree

Women

Men
• **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
Data Analysis/Results

• 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.
Results-Specific Items

• Paid employment

• Advice

• Medication

• Total
• 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.
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


Questions?

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