PARALLEL SESSION A

A1-S108 Symposium
Educating for an aging society: competencies, knowledge and attitude and how to motivate students

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Introduction: Due to an aging population more nurses will encounter vulnerable patients in their daily work. Our health care system faces huge challenges with regard to the demand on care for the older adults and the competencies of nurses required to meet this demand. Several studies demonstrated that nursing (aides) curricula are not adequate to prepare nursing (aides) students for the demographic changes.

Other research report that many nurses have a negative attitude towards and lack knowledge about older patients. However, many of the instruments used for this type of research are considered outdated, too country-specific or do not include a patient focus or caring perspective. Measuring knowledge and attitude is an important first step in enhancing attitude and knowledge.

Aim: To determine essential competencies and recommendations for educational strategies for the education of nurses and nurse assistants regarding care for older adults. Presenting the development, validation and reliability results of the Knowledge about Older Patient - Quiz (KOP-Q) and the Older Patient in Acute Care Survey (OPACS). These two measurement instruments demonstrate promising results for measuring nurses' knowledge of and attitude towards older patients. Furthermore, new ways to motivate students: a serious game for educating nurses, will be presented.

Essential competencies and learning strategies for the education of nurses regarding care for older adults

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Background: Due to the demographic changes, the Dutch health care system faces huge challenges with regard to the demand on care for older persons and the competencies of nurses / aides required to meet this demand. A recent study in the Netherlands showed that the nursing (aides) curricula are not adequate to prepare nursing (aides) students for the aging population. On top of this the focus of care for older persons is changing; from treatment of illnesses towards preservation of independency, self-management and participation in society. Older persons should have a more active role in the caring process and in decisions concerning their health and illnesses. The attitude of older persons is also changing; older people want to have a more active and assertive role in health care. This paradigm shift implies changes for the health care professionals and for the way we educate nurses / nursing aides.

Objective: To determine the essential competencies and recommendations for educational strategies for the education of nurses and nursing aids regarding care for the older population in different settings in health care.

Materials and Methods: A draft version of competencies was developed based on literature, reviewed by experts of the nursing / nursing aides schools and older persons. The second version was discussed in a meeting with geriatric teaching experts and representatives of the Dutch Nursing Association and the Dutch Association for Residential and Homecare Organizations. The final version was approved by a steering committee with representatives of health care institutes and older persons.

Results: A set of essential competencies for the initial education of nurses/ nursing aides was determined according to the seven roles of the CanMEDS. Learning outcomes and learning content were described for every role. Also seven recommendations for educational strategies were described.

Conclusion: The set of determined competencies and the description of the learning outcomes and learning content are better in line with the changing values in care for the older population. The described content is changing towards themes like maintenance of functional independency, self-management, support autonomy and informal care, anti-ageism, healthy aging, multi-disciplinary collaboration and risk assessment. The challenge is to implement these competencies into the educational programs of the Dutch nursing schools.

Development, (cross-cultural) validation and reliability of the Knowledge-about-Older-Patient Quiz

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Background: Several studies present a negative attitude of nurses toward older people based on their limited interest in working with older patients. These attitudes can be positively influenced by increasing nurses' knowledge about older patients. Given the lack of reliable and valid instruments that measure solely nurses' knowledge, a new measurement instrument was developed called the Knowledge-about-Older-Patient Quiz (KOP-Q). The KOP-Q assesses the 'knowledge' about older patients and the 'certainty about this knowledge' of hospital nurses.

Materials and methods: 1) Content development: Open interviews were conducted with 7 scientific experts and 10 nurse specialists in gerontology, geriatrics, and/or nursing and 5 older patients, 70 + with hospital experience in the last 2 years. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis. On the derived themes, 185 questions were developed and discussed in a Delphi round. 2) Validity and reliability: Content validity was assessed with twelve experts scoring each item of the initial KOP-Q (52 items) on relevance. Psychometric validation followed in four groups: (1) 107 first-year bachelor-of-nursing students; (2) 78 final year bachelor-of-nursing students; (3) 148 registered nurses; and (4) 20 nurse specialists. Item discrimination and difficulty were examined using item response theory (IRT). 3) Cross-cultural validity: 201 Dutch nurses and 130 nurses from the USA completed the KOP-Q. The level of measurement invariance (configural, metric or scalar invariance) across languages was tested by running increasingly constrained structural equation models, and testing whether differences between these models were significant.

Results: 1) Content development: Identified themes were: normal aging, geriatric conditions, signaling problems in old age, interventions, family interventions, vulnerable patients versus older patients and internal motivation for learning and reflection. After a Delphi round 52 items remained. 2) Validity and reliability: Forty three of the 52 items remained after assessing content validity. Two items had ceiling effects and 11 items were deleted by demonstrating DIF (different item functioning). Item characteristics of the remaining 30 items demonstrated good discrimination and difficulty parameters. 3) Cross-cultural validity: Testing measurement invariance across the Netherlands and USA indicated a stable, partial scalar invariance (15 items full scalar invariance) for the knowledge items and full scalar invariance for the certainty items.

Conclusion: The KOP-Q is a psychometric solid and comprehensive instrument that can be used to assess nurses' knowledge about older patients in the hospital setting in both the Netherlands and the USA.

Validity and reliability of the Older Patient Acute Care Survey in the Australian nursing context

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Background: The Older Patient Acute Care Survey (OPACS) was developed in response to a dearth of research instruments to examine nurses' knowledge about, and attitudes and practices towards older patients in acute care settings. Previously developed instruments provided a limited focus which was country specific or retained a focus on older people rather than older patients. Nurses are at the forefront of care provision and so need to be equipped to support the increasing numbers of older patients to improve the outcomes for this vulnerable section of the population.

Materials and Methods: Prior to its inclusion in a longitudinal study of the factors