

Session 1.10
Education Track

Abstract Title:

A Proposal for Integrating the Environmental Domain of the Taxonomy of Nursing Practice into Nursing Education

Presenters:

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Intended Audience:

Educators

Areas of Focus:

Critical Thinking, Use in Practice, Use in Education, Linking or Integrating Nursing Language

Research Format:

For Non-Research Reports

TOPIC: Environmental health is a prerequisite for individual, community, and global health. Student nurses need to be introduced to environmental health concepts early in their education, and learn how the Taxonomy of Nursing Practice offers a framework for relating nursing process to the environmental health domain. Nurses will then value the central role of the environmental domain and be better prepared to apply environmental nursing concepts in practice settings.

BACKGROUND: Recent disasters have highlighted the relationship between the environment and health of individuals and communities. Nurses need to have educational preparation and resources to be able to recognize environmental health threats, and plan and carry out care for individuals and communities experiencing health effects related to the environment. The Taxonomy of Nursing Practice encourages nurses to consider the functional, physiologic, psychological, and environmental domains when caring for individuals and communities. Incorporating the Taxonomy of Nursing Practice into nursing education will provide and promote consistent use of language when planning and implementing care within the environmental domain.

DESCRIPTION: The Taxonomy of Nursing Practice prepares students for holistic interdisciplinary practice, especially when it integrates environmental health concepts. Threading the environmental domain throughout nursing curricula teaches students to be proactive when considering often overlooked environmental health threats. Students learn to assess for environmental exposure, presence of environmental hazards, patterns of illness, and other indicators of unhealthful responses to the environment. Students gain facility with nursing language as they identify and plan outcomes and interventions associated with environmental health effects. A curriculum that includes an environmental health context prepares graduates with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for the roles of environmental health care provider, advocate, collaborator, educator, and researcher. Using the Taxonomy of Nursing Practice assures that the environmental domain will not be overlooked. In addition to discussing how the environmental domain can be incorporated into nursing curricula, the authors will also examine the current status of the environmental domain and suggest areas that need strengthening and further development.

CONCLUSION: A comprehensive approach to nursing practice requires awareness, recognition and treatment of environmental hazards that affect individuals, communities, and society. Nurses need to take an active role in identifying environmental components that affect health and in planning care that responds to environmental health needs. Introduction of the environmental domain early in nursing education and further development of environmental nursing diagnoses, interventions, and outcomes will encourage the use of appropriate nursing language, ensuring greater accountability in practice.

Citations:

Polk, L. V. & Green, P. M. (2007). Contamination: Nursing diagnoses with outcomes and interventions. *International Journal of Nursing Terminologies and Classification*, 18(2), 39-46.

Green, P. M., Polk, L. V. & Slade, D. S. (2003). Environmental nursing diagnoses: A proposal for developing Taxonomy II. *International Journal of Nursing Terminologies and Classification*, 14 (1), 19-28.