

Experiences and perceptions of nursing home placements by student nurses and their teachers: an integrative review of the UK literature.

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Background: Nursing older people in nursing homes is often not viewed as favourably as nursing in acute care environments.

Aim: The aim of this integrative literature review is to synthesise and analyse the current status of UK empirical research knowledge regarding student nurses perceptions and experiences of learning to care for older people in nursing homes in the UK.

Method: An electronic literature search of 9 health, social care and grey databases, published from 2000 to December 2019 in English. Papers were included using pre-allocated criteria and 315 qualified for closer examination. After exclusion, 9 papers were included for final analysis and synthesis.

Results: Five main themes described the educational preparation of nursing students for placements in nursing homes; i) students' perceptions of their preparation prior to a nursing home placement; ii) students' perceptions of care models in practice, iii) students' experiences of the theory/practice gap, iv) students experiences of safeguarding, v) students appreciated open communication.

Conclusion:

- ❖ Content relating to the care of older people in long term care is often missing in the nursing curriculum resulting in inconsistencies between theory and practice experiences.
- ❖ Educators should take responsibility for strengthening long term older person care in the nursing curriculum in order to enhance nursing homes as learning environments.

Implications for practice: Further research is required to explore how nursing students are prepared for nursing home placements in order to address the nursing needs of the ageing population.



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Nursing students' perceptions are that curriculum preparation related to nursing older people in nursing homes is lacking in the UK pre-registration adult nursing curriculum.



Students' experiences of their preparation prior to a nursing home placement.

- ❖ Some students' perceived that they would not require training to work in a nursing home because of their prior experiences (Banning et al 2006).
- ❖ The prior experiences that students' bring with them into practice help to shape their attitudes and perceptions towards working in nursing homes (Brown 2006)
- ❖ It is important to develop an understanding of the Registered Nurse (RN) role prior to commencing a nursing home placement (Wade and Skinner 2001; Banning et al 2006).

Students' perceptions of care models in practice.

- ❖ There is a disparity between the philosophy of care taught in the classroom and students' experiences of nursing home placements (Brown et al 2008; Duggan et al 2011).
- ❖ Prior to nursing home placements students likened experiences of nursing older people to the biomedical model of care. After age specific placements students were more positive about caring for older people more holistically (Duggan et al 2011).

Students' experiences of the theory/practice gap

- ❖ Theoretical content is 'seriously lacking' in the nursing curriculum (Duggan et al 2011).
- ❖ There is too much emphasis on acute care in the adult nursing curriculum (Wade and Skinner 2001; Duggan et al 2011; Kydd et al 2014).
- ❖ The experiences of university teachers influences the ability of nursing students to identify meaningful learning goals and outcomes for nursing home placements (Wade and Skinner 2001; Alabaster, 2006; Brown 2006).

Students' experiences of safeguarding

- ❖ Students value the opportunity to ask questions and raise concerns about practice (Wade and Skinner 2001; Brown 2006; Duggan et al 2011; Clarke 2015).
- ❖ Despite this, students' feel unequipped and under prepared to challenge poor practice (Duggan et al 2011).

Students' experiences of open communication.

- ❖ Effective, open communication within a well led team profoundly effects students' experiences in nursing home placements (Brown et al 2008).
- ❖ Open communication between the university and the placement area enables students' to identify learning needs (Wade and Skinner 2001; Brown 2006).