E-Poster

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Development of Interdisciplinary Rehabilitation Teams: First Seminar in Rehabilitation Nursing in Ghana

Topic: Education (Medical Student, Residency & Post-Graduate)

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BACKGROUND

Nursing plays a vital role in multidisciplinary rehabilitation teams, enhancing patient care and education while supporting rehabilitation physicians. In Ghana, a two-year fellowship program has trained physical and rehabilitation medicine (PRM) physicians, increasing the demand for nurses skilled in rehabilitation care. Providing targeted education to nurses can foster the growth of rehabilitation services and improve patient outcomes.

METHODS

A collaborative team of local stakeholders and international experts developed a rehabilitation nursing training program in Kumasi, Ghana. The team included a Ghanaian rehabilitation physician leading the national fellowship, key nursing leaders from Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital (KA), and rehabilitation nursing experts from the U.S.

The team assessed current nursing training, identified knowledge gaps, and designed educational sessions/resource materials aligned with international standards. Nurses from high-impact hospital units (neurology, neurosurgery, orthopedics, stroke, neuro intensive care unit (ICU), emergency care) were selected for participation. Two local PRM physicians from the IRF training program contributed to lectures and hands-on training. The curriculum incorporated Rehabilitation 2030 principles, ensuring alignment with global rehabilitation goals.

A two-day lecture series covered core rehabilitation concepts, including:

- Role and importance of rehabilitation nurses
- WHO Rehabilitation 2030 goals; current rehabilitation practices in Ghana
- Medical topics: neurogenic bowel/bladder, spinal cord injury, wound care, mobility training, dysphagia, respiratory care, deep vein thrombosis (DVT) prophylaxis, pain management, sexuality
- Hands-on training included: wound care, mobility and transfer techniques, and feeding tube management. Pre-and post-tests assessed knowledge acquisition, feedback was collected on program effectiveness and practical application.

RESULTS

The program generated significant interest, 75 nurses expressed a desire to attend. Due to space/participation constraints, 36 were selected and completed the training, earning educational certificates.

Key outcomes included:

- 100% of participants correctly identified rehabilitation nursing principles and pressure ulcer prevention techniques.
- 94% distinguished between upper motor neuron (UMN) and lower motor neuron (LMN) bowel dysfunction; 91% correctly identified neurogenic bladder interventions.
- 97% demonstrated understanding of dysphagia management.

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- 86% of participants reported a new perspective on patient care, and 91% supported ongoing rehabilitation education.
- 83% found hands-on training beneficial, and 86% became more aware of Ghana's PMR training programs and rehabilitation physician activities and practices.

Participants expressed enthusiasm for continued education and advocated for recognizing rehabilitation nursing as a subspecialty in Ghana.

CONCLUSION

Establishing well-trained multidisciplinary rehabilitation teams is essential for advancing PMR care/improving patient outcomes. This seminar's success highlights the demand for rehabilitation nursing education, and potential for integrating training into university curricula. Future efforts should focus on expanding training opportunities and formalizing rehabilitation nursing in Ghana.

Statement of Disclosures

Not applicable