

Cultural Variations in End-of-Life Simulation

Victoria R. Hammer, Susan M. Herm and Katherine A. Koepke
St. Cloud State University, USA

The Cultural Variations in End-of-Life Simulations were created Fall 2012 for a second semester baccalaureate nursing course entitled Nursing Care of Older Adults. End-of-life (EOL) content was included in the classroom course, but there were no end-of-life simulations. Some students cared for a person at EOL or cared for a person of a different culture. End-of-life simulations were developed revolving around the time of 15 minutes before and after death for the three cultures of Christian Caucasian, Native American, and Islam Somali. These were chosen as they were predominate cultures where the nursing students had clinical experiences. Individuals from each culture and health professionals participated in developing the scenarios. Research data focusing on the students' perspective was collected immediately following the full day enactment of the three simulations (Phase I), at the time of graduation (Phase II), and approximately one year after graduation (Phase III). The data collection included thoughts and feelings or experiences; what went well; what to change; and what was learned. Phase I data has been collected from ten cohorts (N=350). Phase II data has been collected from seven cohorts (N=232). Phase III data has been collected from five cohorts (N=31). Themes from the Phase I data: students learned EOL care for patients/families and cultural and spiritual implications of care and felt more comfortable and prepared for performing EOL cares including communicating with families. Phase II data: 129 out of 232 (56%) had experienced EOL situations during the nursing program, felt prepared to care for those at EOL, and were more aware of cultural/spiritual needs for all patients/families. Phase III: the new graduate nurses felt comfortable and confident providing care for a dying patient and their family in a variety of settings and were more cultural sensitive to needs of a patient/family from other cultures.

Biography:

Victoria is an Associate Professor in the Department of Nursing, St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, MN. She currently teaches courses in Nursing Care of the Older Adult, Nursing Law and Ethics, Nursing Leadership and Management, and Nursing Capstone Seminar. She received her BS in Nursing from St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN, her Master's in Nursing from the University of Washington, Seattle, and her Doctorate of Education in Adult and Higher Education from the University of South Dakota, Vermillion. She is a member of Sigma Theta Tau International and the National League of Nursing.