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Life and Death Education Workshop for Newly Graduated Nurses: Exploring its Usefulness and the Learning Experience

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Video & song appreciation

Group discussion

Debriefing

Introduction

Nurses frequently confront with death and dying in their clinical work and could feel helpless in this regard if they are ill prepared. Life and death education can help them to expand their knowledge and change their attitude towards death. Newly graduated nurses are particularly lacking both personal and clinical experience in relation to death and dying. It is important to help them get prepared. This study aimed to explore the usefulness of a life and death education workshop to newly graduated nurses.

Objectives

- (1) To describe the format and content of the workshop
- (2) To examine the usefulness of the workshop
- (3) To explore participants' learning experience

Methodology

Two identical 4-hour workshops were held with a total number of 78 participants. The workshop was composed of lecture on basic palliative care concepts, advance care planning and basic communication skills; experiential exercise to facilitate reflections on own perception/experience of death; related video and song appreciation; group discussion; and debriefing.

Participants' feedback on the workshop was collected by an evaluation form and a reflective memo. The evaluation form consisted of a 9-item Likert scale to assess to what extent the participants agreed that the workshop achieved its objectives and was useful, and five open-ended questions to explore comments and reflections on the workshop. The reflective memo collected information on the participants' insights after joining the workshop. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the quantitative data.

Result

Analysis of the quantitative data showed that 83 to 92% of the participants agreed or strongly agreed that the workshop had achieved its objectives, the workshop was practical and the speaker enhanced participants' learning.

Analysis of the qualitative data showed that the workshop (1) raised death awareness; (2) facilitated the participants to relate death to life where the participants thought about they should and their patients should be helped to live to the fullest; and (3) helped the participants recognize that communication skills was essential.

Conclusions:

This study showed that life and death education workshops could help newly graduated nurses to understand the core elements of palliative and end-of-life care and enhanced their death awareness. This kind of workshop could prepare them to meet challenges in relation to life and death in their work.