Assessing Student Empathy for Hemodialysis Patients

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**Recommended Citation**

Cailor, Stephanie M.; Conkey, Logan; Farleman, Laura K.; Wilcox, Rachel M.; and Laswell, Emily M., "Assessing Student Empathy for Hemodialysis Patients" (2014). *Pharmacy and Nursing Student Research and Evidence-Based Medicine Poster Session*. 58.  
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Assessing Student Empathy for Hemodialysis Patients
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STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Hemodialysis
• Used by 95% of kidney failure patients.¹
• Strict treatment regimen, which normally includes visiting a treatment center 3 times a week for 3 to 5 hours each visit.²
• Patients on hemodialysis experience a loss of autonomy, independence, and freedom.³,⁴
• Estimated 50% of patients on hemodialysis don’t fully adhere to their treatment regimen.⁴
• Patients on hemodialysis will be more compliant to treatment if they are satisfied with the care they are shown by providers.⁵

Empathy in Healthcare
• Ability of healthcare professionals to empathize influences the patient’s quality of care and treatment compliance.⁶
• Lower empathy levels → correlated to more medical errors by physicians.⁶
• Higher empathy levels → associated with more accurate diagnoses, increased patient engagement in their health care, and better adherence to therapy.⁷

Current Empathy for Patients on Hemodialysis
• No current data on the empathy levels of healthcare professionals towards patients on hemodialysis.
• Interventions could be effective in improving the empathy of healthcare professional students towards these patients, as previous interventions have shown positive results.⁸,⁹

Significance of the Problem
• Hemodialysis patients should be shown empathy, but are healthcare professionals being trained to be empathetic towards these patients?
• No current data on empathy levels of healthcare professional students towards patients on hemodialysis.
• This data is needed to develop appropriate interventions to increase student empathy towards this population.

Why students?
• Attitudes developed during school impact the future of patient-focused healthcare and patient outcomes.

OBJECTIVES

What factors influence student empathy towards patients on hemodialysis?
Objective 1: To determine what factors influence medical, pharmacy, and nursing student empathy towards patients on hemodialysis.
Objective 2: To determine medical, pharmacy, and nursing student empathy levels towards patients on hemodialysis.
Objective 3: To design and implement an intervention based on determined factors to increase student empathy in Cedarville University School of Pharmacy students.

HYPOTHESES

Objective 1:
H₀: There is no difference in factors that influence student empathy toward patients on hemodialysis.
H₁: There will be factors that have a significant impact on student empathy levels.

Objective 2:
H₀: There is no difference in empathy levels between medical, nursing, and pharmacy students toward patients on hemodialysis.
H₁: There will be a difference in empathy levels between medical, nursing and pharmacy students towards patients on hemodialysis.

PROPOSED METHODS

Phase One:
Study Design
• Observational cross-sectional
• Assessing student empathy at one point in time
Sample
• Convenience sampling method
• Must be current pharmacy, nursing or medical student studying in Ohio

Data Collection
• Surveys distributed to students via email
• Survey responses recorded by Qualtrics online software

Measurement
• Demographic questionnaire
• Student empathy levels measured by Kiersma-Chen Empathy Scale (KCES)
  • KCES composed of 15 survey questions with 7-point Likert-type responses¹⁰
  • KCES is both reliable and valid in nursing and pharmacy students but has not been validated in medical students¹⁰

Phase Two:
Intervention
• Pre-post survey in Cedarville University pharmacy students
• Intervention during GI/Renal Module (students taking module)

PROPOSED ANALYSES

• IBM SPSS 22 for all statistical analysis
• Descriptive statistics to analyze demographic factors
• T-tests:
  • To determine which factors significantly influence student empathy levels
  • One-way ANOVA:
  • To compare students in different healthcare professions and determine different empathy levels

LIMITATIONS

• Student’s ability to internally reflect
• Generalizability across students in 3 health professions outside Ohio
• KCES not validated in medical students
• Potential for student to retake survey
• Generalizability of intervention beyond pharmacy students

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

• Future projects could include:
  • Interventions to develop empathy in other medical professional students (ex. Nursing)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
Thank you to Aleda Chen, PharmD. PhD., and Mary Kiersma, PharmD. PhD., for their permission to use the Kiersma-Chen Empathy Scale in this study.

REFERENCES