Assessing Metabolic Syndrome in Individuals with Serious Mental Health Disorders as a Student Nurse Service Learning

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Overview: Objectives

- Describe a Community Service Learning Project Assessment of Metabolic Syndrome in Individuals Experiencing Serious Mental Illness
- Discuss Increasing Awareness of the Risks of Metabolic Syndrome as a health concern for individuals experiencing serious mental illness
- Discuss University and Community partnerships that benefit both student nurses learning and populations needing health services

Student Project

- To learn about the severe problem of metabolic syndrome in individuals with serious psychiatric disorders and provide a service learning and community service, student nurses enrolled in a junior level baccalaureate theory and clinical course in psychiatric mental health nursing conducted the assessment in a Community setting during the Harvest Full of Hope Conference, a conference targeted for consumers and providers of mental health services.

Teaching Students Learning Psychiatric Nursing to Practice Holistic Integrated Community Based Nursing

- Student nurses participated in a service learning experience to assess Metabolic Syndrome as a community health concern of individuals diagnosed with psychiatric disorder.
- Highly competent effective nursing care involves integrating holistic concepts into practice. Students learning the essentials of nursing practice need to incorporate knowledge medical surgical nursing, community/population health, and psychiatric nursing in practice to deliver the highest level of care to their patients.

Evidenced Based Nursing education

- Evidence based research has linked student learning while also addressing community public health problems as effective for both the student and the community (Brosnan, 2005).
Metabolic Syndrome in the Seriously Mentally Ill – what is it?

- Metabolic syndrome (MetS) is a complex syndrome that includes abdominal obesity, elevated blood pressure, and deregulation of lipid and glucose metabolism (Sacks, 2004), which has been linked to cardiovascular disease and has been historically a concern for individuals who have been diagnosed with serious mental illnesses.

Metabolic Syndrome in Seriously Mentally Ill

- For individuals with schizophrenia who are taking antipsychotic medication, the prevalence of Metabolic Syndrome is reported at 40-60% (Tirupati, 2007).

Metabolic Syndrome in Seriously Mentally Ill is not a new problem

- Newman & Bland (1991) reported over 20 years ago that physical causes such as cardiovascular disease could account for individuals with schizophrenia having a 20% shorter life expectancy, and people with MetS are 2-3 times more likely to have a heart attack or stroke and five times more likely to develop diabetes than those without MetS (Stern, 2004).

Recommendations to Address this health concern in Individuals with Mental Illness

- Screenings for Metabolic Syndrome to identify and help reduce the incidence of this disorder in individuals with psychiatric disorders have been recommended (Batcha 2010; Thompson, 2011; Tirupati, 2007).

Community Mental Health Conference for Individuals/Consumers of Mental Health Services and Service Providers

- Setting: Harvest Full of Hope Conference A Community Mental Health Conference for Consumers and Providers of Mental Health Services

About Harvest Full of Hope

As described on the October 19, 2016 conference brochure:

"Who Should Attend?"
Anyone who is interested in learning about mental health. Consumers as well as their friends, family, and professionals/providers of behavioral health services are welcome to attend.

Mission Statement
Harvest Full of Hope is an annual event where consumers and providers unite to educate, inform and increase mental health awareness."
About Harvest Full of Hope

- **Purpose of Conference**
  - Harvest Full of Hope began in 2001 in the Recreation Center at Allentown State Hospital (ASH). A contest was held for the patients to name the event and **Harvest Full of Hope was the winning entry.** In 2002, the event was taken out of Allentown State Hospital and mental health providers throughout the Lehigh Valley were included. The event is provided free of charge each Fall.
  - The Harvest Full of Hope committee is comprised of mental health professionals/consumers who have a sincere desire to promote “Better Mental Health for All.”

Harvest Full of Hope Conference Link


Student Nurse Service Project Conducted

- Fall 2013
- Fall 2014

Student Competencies

- All students had previously taken courses to that prepare them with the skills to participate in this screening.
- Students had taken courses in Nutrition, Health Assessment, Introduction to the Professional of Practice of Nursing, and Health Care of Children.
- They were also concurrently taking courses in Nursing Research and Adult Health Nursing I.
- They received a review instruction regarding assessing BP, waist circumstance, height, weigh, BMI

Assessment Measures

- Waist circumference/ Girth
- Blood Pressure
- Weight/height
- Body Mass Index

Education provided

- Posters containing information about Metabolic Syndrome
- Personal one on one education from nursing students regarding metabolic syndrome
- Public available handouts, such as from NAMI, American Heart, Web Site
- A slip of paper with any readings taken
- Students provided Counseling to individuals to report any reading outside a normal range to obtain follow up treatment

Tables/booth set up

- Picture
Student Response
- Students felt that they were providing a very valuable hands on service
- Reported feeling more comfortable addressing holistic health concerns
- Felt more competent assessing factors related to metabolic syndrome
- Enjoyed interacting with individuals who had previously been diagnosed with mental problems in a nonhospital community conference setting

Participation
- At least 100 individuals participated in this project, and closer to 200 received some type of assessment or information
- An exact number was difficult since some individuals only wanted a blood pressure taken, some wouldn’t get on a scale, and some were not interested in having their waste measured

Participation in this Screening
- Voluntary
- Free
- Confidential
- Many individuals approached the tables to be assessed
- Thanked students and this faculty member for providing the service
- Were eager to learn

Participant Response
- At times the students had many individuals who wanted a “quick” assessment, and then the participant was off to the next table or booth at the conference
- Sometimes like a mob scene – and hard to control the input of participants and data – so this will have to be addressed prior to engaging in a formal research project

Future Research
- For Students enrolled in Undergraduate Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing: Is participation in a service learning experience metabolic syndrome screenings for individuals suffering from Psychiatric Disorders an effective method of learning holistic nursing practice considerations?
- How many individuals who have been previously diagnosed with a serious psychiatric disorder, who seek assessment or information related to metabolic syndrome, actually have abnormal findings or risk for metabolic syndrome?

References
References


