



Teaching FNP Students to Provide Primary Mental Health Care

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Abstract:

Background: Family Nurse Practitioners are increasingly being challenged to deliver mental health services in primary care. Indeed, over half of mental health services are provided in primary care and one quarter of all primary care patients have a mental disorder. Moreover, adults with mental illness are at risk to have chronic diseases and one half of mental illnesses begin in children fourteen or younger: "Yet, people with mental illnesses who are treated in a primary care setting are less likely to receive effective behavioural health care (NIH 2017)". **Intervention:** A three credit didactic course was developed to educate Family Nurse Practitioners students in the skills needed to provide effective mental health services in primary care. The course begins with developing the students' therapeutic communication and interviewing skills. This is vital because it presents an effective method of helping through observation and verbal/non-verbal communication. Interviewing skills help establish trusting relationships and the ability to understand patient's behaviour. Although students at first think these skills are easy, these skills need considerable practice to be effective. We next discuss mental illness in the context of culture to ensure that the mental health services are congruent with a patient's unique cultural background and experiences. Family Nurse Practitioners students need to have an understanding of how the patients personal culture is an integration of their life long experience in the dominant-culture, sub-culture, and their family culture. One's personal culture shapes one's beliefs and behaviours, which will influence the way they view their problem and what they perceive as acceptable solutions. Understanding the importance of patients' personal culture goes beyond accepting cultural stereotypes present in society. We go into detail about the common mental illnesses frequently seen in primary care.



Biography:

Victoria T. Grando, PhD, RN, Dean of Nursing and Professor Grando completed a post-doctorate in gerontological nursing at the University of Iowa in Iowa City, Iowa; a doctorate in nursing with a minor in women's history at the University of Kansas, in Kansas City, Kansas; a master's of science in community mental health nursing at the University of MissouriColumbia in Columbia, Missouri; a bachelor of science in nursing at Missouri State University in Springfield, Missouri; and a diploma in nursing at Kings County Hospital Center in Brooklyn, New York. Grando has published 35 articles in journals of which she was the lead author for 11, three book chapters, 12 abstracts, three book reviews and given 10 presentations at international conferences and 47 presentations at national and regional conferences. She's also authored 15 grants of which seven were funded. Her experience in graduate student advisement includes serving on 13 dissertations and/or program committees, four graduate portfolio committees, as well as advising doctoral students. She has taught numerous graduate and undergraduate nursing courses. She has also served on seven masters portfolios and research practicums. Grando is a member of the Sigma Theta Tau International and the Gerontological Society of America

Publication of speakers:

1. NIH, 2017.
2. 2. A HEALTHCARE REFORM ISSUE BRIEF, 2018

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