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Nurses knowledge on heart failure education and self-management principles

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Background: According to guidelines, it is essential in the care of patients with heart failure (HF) to have a multidisciplinary treatment programs designed to improve the quality of life (QoL) and treatment outcomes through the systematization of further observation and control of the clinical status of patients in conjunction with their education, optimization of medical therapy, psychosocial support, and also access to treatment. The key role of educator and coordinator of these programs are assigned to a nurse who must be prepared to undertake this task.

Aim: Assessment of the level of knowledge of nurses on the main principles of health education and preparation of patients with HF to self-care.

Methods: Participants were 227 nurses taking care of patients with HF, working in cardiology departments (129), cardiac intensive care units (48) and family practice (50). In this study Nurses Knowledge of Heart Failure Education Principles Survey was used. The statistical analysis software Statistica 10 T-test and analysis of variance for categorical variables (working setting) and correlation tests (Pearson's) plus simple linear regression for continuous variables (experience) was used.

Results: The mean heart failure self-care knowledge score was 12.1 (SD 2.7), which corresponds to the percentage of correct responses at the level of 60.4 (SD 13.4) The highest number of correct responses achieved nurses working in the intensive cardiac care units 12.39 (SD 2.7) then in the cardiology departments: 12.3 (SD 2.7). The lowest results achieved nurses working in family doctor practice: 10.74 (SD 2.3) (p <0.001). Statistically significant positive correlation was found between nurses knowledge and education (r = + 0.1399), the number of post diploma courses (r = + 0.1483), and a specialization in cardiovascular nursing (r = + 0.1457) (p <0.05).

Conclusion: Unfortunately our results have showed that Polish nurses do not have the adequate knowledge on HF self-care management. Postgraduate education in the field of Cardiovascular Nursing, post diploma courses prepare the best to serve as an educator in multidisciplinary teams in the care of patients with HF.