

## PATIENT SAFETY IN THE CONTEXT OF UNDERGRAD EDUCATION IN NURSING

Flávia Sampaio Latini Gomes - Enfermeira. Doutora em Enfermagem. Professora Adjunta do Departamento de Enfermagem Básica da Escola de Enfermagem da Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (UFMG). Coordenadora da Rede Brasileira de Enfermagem e Segurança do Paciente (REBRAENSP) - Núcleo Belo Horizonte.

The largest number of health professionals in Brazil is in Nursing. These professionals aim at CARE, which should be provided with safety and protection (as redundant as it may sound) to preserve people's lives. "Safe care" is based on value that constitute, organize and develop care. That is, the patient safety must go along with care, and to measure the quality of such care, one must analyze how safe it is. There is valuable scientific evidence that provides learning, practice and the evaluation of care. Such evidence also contribute to promote safety in Nursing, regardless of the procedure: data collection, diagnosis, planning, implementation and evaluation of Nursing<sup>1</sup>.

The law may also be important to organize care. Regarding patient safety, a good example is the National Program of Patient Safety (PNSP), implemented by the Ministry of Health, through Ordinance no. 529, of April 1st, 2013<sup>2</sup>. It preconizes the qualification of care in whatever health institution in Brazil and the list of actions proposed thereby is connected with public policies<sup>2</sup>.

Furthermore, Article three, item V, of the same ordinance sets forth the specific purpose of "fomenting the inclusion of patient safety in the technical education, undergraduation and graduation in health"<sup>2</sup>. This purpose is consistent with the World Health Organization's recommendation, which, in 2011, published the Curricular Guidelines for Patient Safety: multi-professional edition<sup>3</sup>. These guidelines propose 11 topics that may be included in the curricula, according to their needs, requirements and resources, such as: (1) what is patient safety?, (2) why is the use of human factors (relationship between technology and human beings) important for patient safety, (3) understanding the systems and the effects of complexity in patient safety, (4) being an effective team member, (5) learning with mistakes to avoid damages, (6) understanding and managing clinical risks, (7) using methods to improve quality and care, (8) involving patients and caretakers, (9) infection prevention and control, (10) patient safety and invasive procedures, and (11) improving safety while using medications<sup>3</sup>.

It is worth pointing out that, currently in Brazil, among all existing undergrad majors, Nursing is the sixth out of ten majors with the largest number of registered students. It is challenging considering that this number of potential nurses must be duly prepared and technically qualified in aspects related to patient safety. Mortality due to patient unsafety, that is, due to adverse events, in the United States, is greater than

mortality due to obstructive chronic lung illness (DPOC), suicide or guns; it is only lower than mortality due to heart diseases and cancer<sup>4</sup>.

Thus, the undeniable importance of this topic to qualify nurses and why it should be included in the curricula of undergrad majors in Nursing. Therefore, this topic should be studied in one of the transversal axes of this matrix, both horizontally (the school year or term) and vertically, as an ascending spiral, which comprises courses or curricular units to build knowledge during the major.

However, in some majors, patient safety is included in a sole course, which may limit and hamper learning possibilities. The more diverse the learning contexts and environments are, the easier it is to acquire abilities and attitudes to promote safety. In a study that aimed at analyzing the educational structure of the undergrad majors in health of the Federal University of São Paulo (including Nursing), the authors show that the training on patient safety is “fragmented, and lacks depth and concept”. Therefore, the valorization of specific aspects to qualify professionals according to the nature of the major and the need to restate the educational projects were recommended, including the interdisciplinary approach<sup>5</sup>.

In Brazil, the inclusion of patient safety in undergrad Nursing schools is fairly recent. Therefore, seeking the inclusion of the topic in the curriculum, as one of the transversal axes, increasing their complexity, comprising theoretical and practical aspect, as well as different learning strategies may be important to complement the Nurse’s solid education.

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