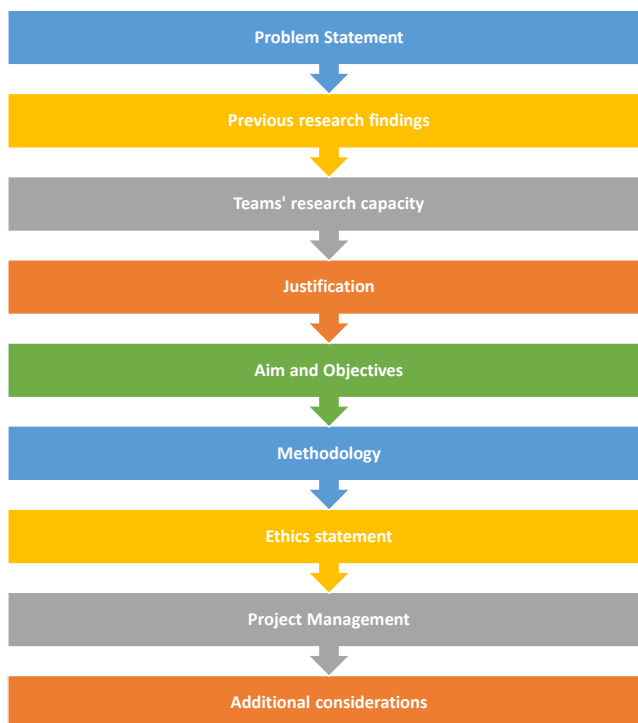


Research Proposal Flow-chart

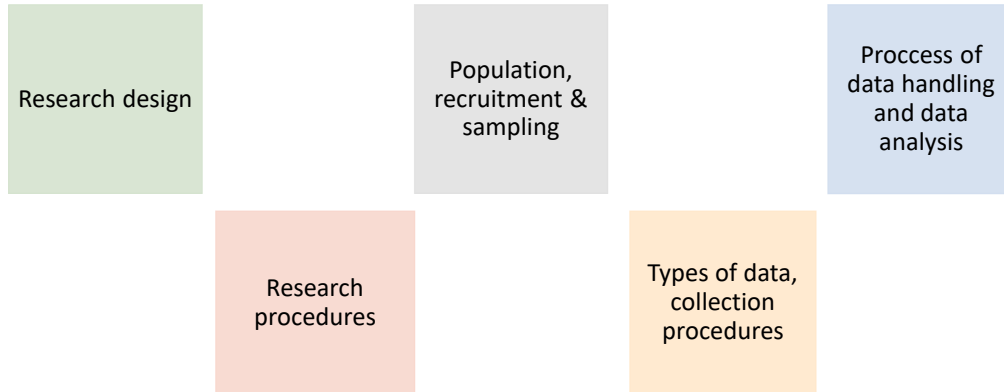
Methods



Flow-chart



Methods







Overview of research



Feature Article

The Impact of the End-of-Life Nursing Education Consortium International Training Program on the Clinical Practice of Eastern European Nurses Working in Specialized Palliative Care Services

A Romanian Case Study

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Palliative care nurses in Romania have a long history of collaborating with the End-of-Life Nursing Education Consortium (ELNEC) project, a national education initiative administered by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) in Washington, DC, and the City of Hope National Medical Center in Duarte, California. Between January 2013 and October 2014, 1360 Romanian nurses participated in ELNEC palliative care training courses; 306 of these nurses attended both the introductory and advanced ELNEC courses. The aims of this study were to identify the changes implemented by the participant nurses in their clinical practice, after attending ELNEC palliative care introductory and advanced courses, and to compare the participant nurses' palliative care knowledge precourse versus postcourse. The data

were collected from 6 focus groups at 3 to 6 months postcourse, in 6 different locations in Romania. Five themes were identified, with related subthemes including new

perspectives of care, the importance of communication skills, the role of interprofessional teams in the healthcare system, addressing the needs of the patient and family, and informed decision-making by the patient and family. This study showed that the ELNEC introductory and advanced courses lead to changes in the participant nurses' clinical practice and aided nurses in identifying barriers in the Romanian public healthcare system that need to be addressed to improve palliative care.

KEY WORDS

barriers, changes, clinical practice, ELNEC, medical education, palliative care

Methods

Research Methodology

For this phenomenological study, quantitative (precourse and postcourse tests) and qualitative (focus group) methods have been combined to identify and analyze the knowledge acquired by nurses from the introductory and advanced PC modules and the implementation of this knowledge into the nurses' every day clinical practice in Romania.

Research Aim

The aim of this study was to identify, through quantitative and qualitative research methods, the clinical practice changes implemented by nurses who underwent PC introductory and advanced module training and the barriers that need to be overcome to implement the PC training in nurses' clinical practice in Romania.

Research Objectives

1. Evaluate the effect of the introductory and advanced PC training modules on specialized PC participant nurses' level of knowledge in Romania;
2. Establish the domains of competency and the specific competencies implemented in the nurses' clinical practice after the introductory and advanced PC module training;
3. Determine the barriers blocking the enhancement of PC nursing in patient and family care.

Research Methods

To accomplish the first objective, evaluating the effect of the introductory and advanced PC training modules on nurses' level of knowledge, questionnaires in the form of precourse and postcourse tests were used. As to the second objective (identifying competencies implemented in clinical practice) and the third objective (identifying barriers in PC enhancement), 6 focus groups were organized with nurses from 6 different specialized PC service locations, 6 months after the nurses attended the introductory and advanced PC courses. The focus group discussions were audio-recorded, then transcribed verbatim, and analyzed and coded into subthemes, themes, and domains.

Methods



Research design

Research Methodology

For this phenomenological study, quantitative (precourse and postcourse tests) and qualitative (focus group) methods have been combined to identify and analyze the knowledge acquired by nurses from the introductory and advanced PC modules and the implementation of this knowledge into the nurses' every day clinical practice in Romania.

Methods

Research procedures

The grades obtained at precourse and postcourse tests were analyzed and correlated using multiple variables, including participant nurses' ages, geographic areas of the specialized PC service where the nurses worked, years of nursing experience, and previous exposure to continued medical education in the field of PC.

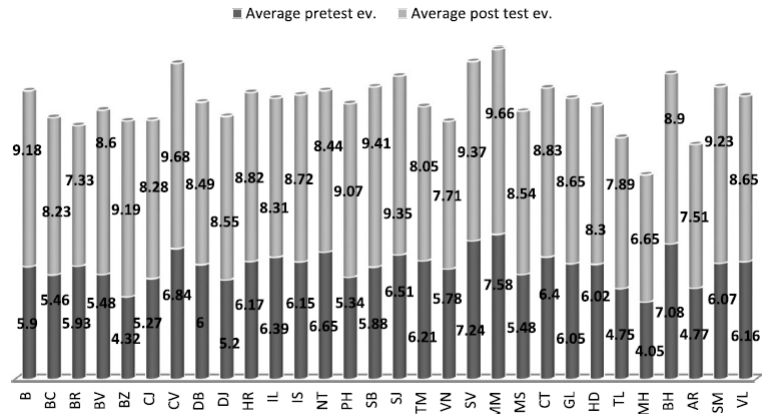


FIGURE 1. Nurses' average grades in precourse and postcourse tests in correlation with nurses' county of residence in Romania.

Methods

Research procedures

Between December 2013 and October 2014, 6 focus groups were organized in 6 different specialized PC (public system, private, or nongovernmental) service locations: București (B), Târgoviște (DB), Toplița (CJ), Ojașca (BZ), Piatra Neamț (NT) and Brașov (BV).

Before the start of the focus groups, a period of 6 months had elapsed since the nurses had attended the PC introductory and advanced courses taught by HCS nurse trainers. The focus group participants were a fairly homogenous group in that all nurse participants had cared for patients with cancer and other chronic progressive diseases and all were interested in applying/incorporating the new knowledge gained during the PC courses in their daily routine/clinical practice. Before the focus group start, each participant was sent an information letter and a consent form. The nurse participants consented to participation, data collection, confidentiality, and other conditions.

The length of each focus group session varied between 1 hour and 1 hour and 56 minutes. Two facilitators, the main and secondary researchers, were present at each focus group. The interview guide was divided into 3 parts: introduction, main questions, and closure, containing a total of 13 questions. After each focus group, new themes and subthemes were identified and added to the list of themes and subthemes. The first 4 focus groups each generated new themes. The last 2 focus groups identified themes previously named by the first 4 focus groups. Two researchers independently analyzed the data collected and then reached consensus. Finding no additional themes, researchers ended the qualitative analysis after the sixth focus group.

Methods

Population, recruitment & sampling

In April 2011, 5 nurses from HCS, in Brasov, Romania, participated in the ELNEC International Training Program held in Salzburg, Austria. Based on the European recommendations for developing PC nursing education,¹¹ including interactive delivery and specific adult learning techniques, the 5 nurse participants translated and adapted the ELNEC International Curriculum. The nurses adapted 2 PC course modules, 1 introductory and 1 advanced, each consisting of 18 teaching hours, creating continued PC medical education for nurses for 15 credit points by the Romanian Order for Registered Nurses, Midwives, and Nursing Technicians. Using these modules, nurse trainers were able to train other nurses in PC skills and principles. Between January 2013 and October 2014, 1360 Romanian nurses participated in ELNEC PC training courses, 306 of whom attended both the introductory and advanced courses. Currently, there are 14 PC nurse trainers at HCS, and together with educational support staff, they organize and hold introductory and advanced PC courses for nurses in Romania and in the region.

Between December 2013 and October 2014, 6 focus groups were organized in 6 different specialized PC (public system, private, or nongovernmental) service locations: București (B), Târgoviște (DB), Toplița (CJ), Ojașca (BZ), Piatra Neamț (NT) and și Brașov (BV).

Methods

Types of data, collection procedures

Research Methods

To accomplish the first objective, evaluating the effect of the introductory and advanced PC training modules on nurses' level of knowledge, questionnaires in the form of precourse and postcourse tests were used. As to the second objective (identifying competencies implemented in clinical practice) and the third objective (identifying barriers in PC enhancement), 6 focus groups were organized with nurses from 6 different specialized PC service locations, 6 months after the nurses attended the introductory and advanced PC courses. The focus group discussions were audio-recorded, then transcribed verbatim, and analyzed and coded into subthemes, themes, and domains.

Methods

Process of data handling and data analysis

Analysis and coding of the 6 focus groups revealed that participant specialty PC nurses had implemented 5 domains of change in their clinical practices after the introductory and advanced PC courses. The domains were as follows:

- new perspective of care
- communication
- the team in the healthcare system
- the patient and the family
- decision-making

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.

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