

of an integrated pharmacology and medicines management curriculum for undergraduate adult nursing students on the acquisition of applied drug/pharmacology.

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The impact of an integrated pharmacology and medicines management curriculum for undergraduate adult nursing students on the acquisition of applied drug/pharmacology knowledge

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### Summary

#### Aims

To investigate the efficacy of a 14-month integrated pharmacology and medicines management curriculum for undergraduate nursing students on the acquisition of applied drug/pharmacology knowledge.

#### Background

Despite considerable debate regarding nurses' ability to be able to fulfill their medication

management responsibilities, little is known about how nurses should be educated in medicines management.

## Methods

Two groups of nursing students were compared. The first group were exposed to the usual curriculum (control group), whilst a second group experienced a new integrated pharmacology and medicines management curriculum (intervention group) ( $N = 120$ ). The impact of the curriculum on applied drug knowledge was assessed using a 69 item short answer questionnaire relating to a vignette. Students also undertook a 42 item on-line test exploring principles of pharmacokinetics. Students were also asked to self-rate their knowledge using a four point likert scale which asked how confident they were in relation to the prescribed medication regime. The data were collected in July 2008. The intervention group was exposed to an integrated curriculum approach, whilst the control group undertook periods of supervised practice within a clinical environment supported with a workbook and practice assessment learning outcomes.

## Results/Findings

Students exposed to an integrated approach to pharmacology and medicines management demonstrated superior pharmacokinetic knowledge and were more able to apply drug knowledge to the patient vignettes than the control group.

## Conclusion

An early introduction of an integrated approach to the teaching and assessing of pharmacological processes improves students' drug knowledge prior to qualification. A sound preparation will help to ensure safe and effective medicines management care for patients and will prepare nurses for post graduate education and further training.



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## Keywords

Adult nursing; Pharmacology; Curriculum development; Medicines management; Nurse education

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