

# Knowledge and practices of staff nurses in the care of dying patients

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This study aimed to determine the knowledge and practices of staff nurses in the care of dying patients in one of the selected hospital in La Union.

Specifically, it sought the profile of staff nurses along age, sex, years of experience, highest educational attainment and area of assignment and the level of knowledge and the extent of practice of staff nurses along physical needs, cognitive needs, emotional needs, social needs, and spiritual needs.

Recommendations were formulated to enhance their level of knowledge and their extent of practice. 173 staff nurses in the hospital were involved.

Questionnaires were used to gather data from July 2012 to August 2012. The study shows majority of the staff nurses are 20-24 years old, female, have 1 month- 1 year of experience, their highest educational attainment is registered nurse, and they are working in medical ward. The staff nurses from a selected tertiary hospital in La Union have a moderate level of knowledge in the care of dying patients along the cognitive, emotional, social, and spiritual needs of a dying patient. On the other hand, the staff nurses on the said hospital have a high level of knowledge in the care of dying patients along the physical needs of a dying patient. The staff nurses sometimes practice the standards in the care of dying patients along physical, cognitive, emotional, social, and spiritual needs. On the other hand, the staff nurses always practice the standards in the care of dying patients along social needs. In the view of the study, the researchers then concluded that most staff nurses are novice or advance beginner on the nursing profession as evidenced by the result of the study that majority of staff nurses are 20-24 years old only. Profile of staff nurses along genders reveals that females still outnumber males in the nursing profession. Along years of

experience in the profile of the staff nurses shows that majority of staff nurses that is working on the said institution only have one month to one year of experience in the nursing field. In the profile of staff nurses along highest educational attainment, 89.60% of the sample population is registered nurses only. A checklist of activities that the researchers had proposed is feasible to be considered and adopted by the Staff Nurses in a selected tertiary hospital in La Union in order to enhance the care for dying patients. The researchers then recommend that in hiring staff nurses to work in the field, it is very important to look upon the profile of staff nurses; hospital administration must be careful enough in choosing their workers for the safety of their clients and to maintain quality care; newly registered nurses must gain enough experience in the actual field and must be advised to still continue learning and educating themselves in order that they fulfill their duties with well equipped knowledge; staff nurses must attend seminars, trainings, and lectures in order to learn more things and be knowledgeable enough to provide nursing care to dying patients and to improve their performance in the care of dying patients along physical, cognitive, emotional, social, and spiritual needs; staff nurses should be more sensitive to the needs of the dying patient and provide care in a holistic approach to consider the wholeness of the well-being and not merely focusing on one aspect; the researchers recommend that the institution should adapt the checklist of activities for the staff nurses to enhance care for the dying patients; and future researchers would undertake a similar study of this nature to validate the findings and also venture on areas not

covered by the study like determining other factors that affect the status of the dying patients.