



The effect of a geriatric education program on emergency nurses.

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Abstract: In a previous study, emergency nurses gave a high priority to the educational topics of geriatric depression, physical assessment of the elderly, and mental status testing. Our objective was to measure the impact of a 1-day workshop for emergency nurses that addressed these educational needs.

The workshop consisted of case-based didactic sessions addressing (1) physical assessment of the elderly, (2) delirium, depression, and dementia, and (3) a practical approach to mental status testing in the elderly. The educational program was evaluated using 2 methods: (1) before, and 1 month after, the workshop, participants rated their own practice patterns; and (2) during the course of 2 years, changes in the number of referrals for geriatric assessment and home care from a large emergency department in the study area were monitored.

Of 101 ED nurses who attended the 1-day workshop, 51 completed both preworkshop and postworkshop questionnaires (response rate, 50.5%). the most significant self-reported changes in practice 1 month after the workshop were improved screening for depression and altered mental status in older adults (P

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