

Preventive Sexual And Reproductive Health Care Content In Australia Pre-Registration Nursing And Midwifery Programs: A Review Of Curricula

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Background:

Preventive sexual and reproductive health (PSRH) care has the potential to significantly promote women's health. Internationally, nurses and midwives predominantly provide this care. However, it is not known how Australian nursing and midwifery pre-registration curricula prepares these clinicians to provide PSRH care.

Methods:

Between November 2022 and March 2023, a cross-sectional study was conducted at all Australian universities that provide pre-registration degrees. Artifacts related to the curriculum such as mode of delivery, program duration, and program PSRH content were obtained from Australian publicly available university websites. Program directors were emailed a questionnaire about PSRH curricula when not all content was found online, or the content was unclear. The retrieval of PSRH information was guided by a terminology matrix, developed following a literature review and research team input. Analysis of explicit (associated synonyms) and implicit (broad or general terminology) was undertaken using counts and proportions.

Results:

From 37 Australian universities, 86 pre-registration nursing and/or midwifery degrees were identified for analysis. Explicit terms were categorized as sexual health, screening, violence, reproductive health related care and psychosocial and cultural care. Implicit terms cover broad or general terms such as primary care, obstetric and gynaecological care, women's health, etc. Of the 92 courses that indicated PSRH content, 47% (n=44) contained explicit PSRH content. Reproductive health content was the most frequently mentioned (57.9%, n=102) and was mainly offered at the undergraduate level in nursing and/or midwifery degrees (89.2%, n=91). This content was more explicit in subject outlines than it was in subject names.

Conclusion:

In preregistration nursing and midwifery programs, the content of PSRH is limited and variable. To better prepare the future workforce equipped to deliver PSRH care, there is a need to have more exposure to these concepts at preregistration.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

None