

Emotional Responses of Nurses Caring for Patients with Opioid Use Disorder: An Integrative Review

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Problem

Substance Use Disorder (SUD), including Opioid Use Disorder (OUD), is a global issue that impacts patients, nurses, and the healthcare system as a whole.

Objective

Patients with OUD are often faced with unique healthcare challenges compared to other populations, which presents implications for nursing care delivery. This review sought to look at the extent of the behaviors associated with nurses who care for these patients and how these feelings impact nurse wellbeing, patient care, and patient outcomes.

Methods

A comprehensive search was performed by a university librarian in five databases and four grey literature sources resulting in a total of 5,923 records.

Screening was performed using Rayyan by five team members. 231 full text studies were screened by full text.

Critical Appraisal of studies was performed using the Johns Hopkins Critical Appraisal tool.

A thematic analysis was performed using the software ATLAS.ti to code prevalence of words.



Search Strategy Deposit

Results

A comprehensive literature search resulted in 107 articles and analyses resulted in three themes: negative emotional responses, positive sentiments, and education.

Negative Emotional Responses

Negative emotional responses from nurses was the predominant theme in the reviewed studies.

Common negative emotional responses nurses recognize in themselves include stigma, distrust, annoyance, avoidance, disappointment, anger, and judgmental and punitive attitudes toward patients with SUD

Positive Sentiments

Nurses who have more knowledge about SUD tend to be more optimistic.

They also have a sense of responsibility to care for this patient population, desire to connect with these patients, and they want patients with SUD to succeed in their treatment.

Education

Overall the concept and theme of education was present in studies. It was seen as a solution and path forward. Training for nurses was found to motivate nurses to work with people with SUD.

Conclusions

Themes demonstrated that from these challenges can come feelings of stigma and other negative emotional responses which impact relationships between nurse and patient, patient care, and patient outcomes. Stigma towards patients with SUD affects both patient and nurse in that the patient may experience diminished care while the nurse feels hopeless; wanting to help, but not knowing how. Nurses who care for this patient population experience burnout and compassion fatigue.



<https://www.pexels.com/photo/a-woman-in-scrub-suit-holding-her-head-4270373/>

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Please contact Julie.Rogan@tuhs.temple.edu with any questions.