Baccalaureate Education in Geriatric Nursing and Long Term Care: A Nationwide Survey

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Abstract Content: Longer average life expectancies and an ageing society have made long-term care a worldwide urgent and important issue. In Taiwan, the elderly population reached 12.2% in 2015 and it has been projected to reach 20% in 2016[c1]. To meet this trend, preparation of sufficient and highly qualified nurses have become the most important task to reach this goal. This report describes the current situation of Geriatric Nursing (GN) and Long-term Care (LTC) courses offered in baccalaureate nursing programs in Taiwan.

Two nationwide surveys had been conducted to explore geriatric and long term care nursing competences, geriatric or long-term care courses curriculum, and to identify needs for curriculum design through review of departmental information on web and questionnaire survey.

Results of secondary data retrieved from the official websites of 14 general universities and 11 universities of science and technology showed that the content of the GN course in every program included physical, psychological and social changes in elderly care, drug safety, and comprehensive geriatric assessment. LTC courses focus on the current system of LTC, policy, management and quality of care of LTC institutions, ethical issues in LTCs. Results of the survey of all 25 universities offering bachelor nursing education program in Taiwan indicated that despite the fact that majority of the universities offered both GN and LTC courses, most of the courses were offered as elective and few had provided corresponding practicum course. Moreover, faculties do not have adequate preparations for teaching in GN or LTC courses. Finally, part of the GN and LTC course contents were overlapped. Geriatric Long Term Care (GLTC) education must be recognized by providing required stand-alone courses and interdisciplinary education in nursing curricula.

The study indicated that the GLTC course could develop the knowledge of evidence-based nursing, positive attitude toward to elderly care and further to contribute to the growth of the nursing competence to promote further nursing practice in geriatric long-term care settings.

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