

Researching Nursing Student Mental Health and Seeking a Specialized Counselor

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Abstract

Nursing students are faced with several challenges while in school, including high levels of stress, anxiety and more specifically testing anxiety. A negative correlation noted when facing these challenges is a decline in mental health as nursing school progresses. This project focuses on interventions that can be put into place to help nursing students maintain a higher level of mental health. A research survey was conducted the Fall semester of 2020. This online survey was offered to all students in the IUS nursing program. The survey questions were related to mental health, anxiety, and the students access to mental health resources. In total, 102 students responded to the survey. Results showed 65% of IUS nursing students have testing anxiety and that 96% of the students were interested in counseling services. The interventions created to address these issues were; offering student seminars to address mental health issues like anxiety and stress, a monthly newsletter that offers tips on studying, test-taking and management of testing anxiety, a mentorship program between the senior nursing students and the sophomore and junior classes, and communication with counselors to work specifically with the IUS school of nursing students. This poster will present data gathered by the IUS senior nursing students, as well as the other activities that took place in order to initiate the proposed interventions.

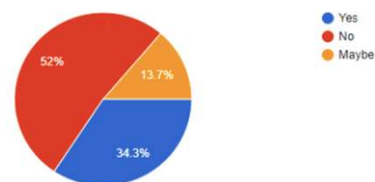
Background

- During the Fall semester of 2020, the Senior nursing students wrote a literature review geared towards the mental health of nursing students. The literature review was based on 10 scholarly articles that discussed topics on stress levels, mental illness & the coping mechanisms of nursing students. The major take away from this literature review was that nursing students have increased mental health needs that require intervention.
- An online survey was offered to all nursing students at IU Southeast that helped the Seniors assess the status of the student's mental health and their access to mental health services. The survey results revealed that 65% of IU Southeast nursing students have testing anxiety and 96% of the students were interested in counseling services.
- The results from the literature review and the mental health survey helped the Senior nursing students develop the following interventions:
 - Designate a non-student counselor specifically to the IU Southeast School of Nursing who is educated on the program.
 - Offer meetings with the counseling department each semester that discuss topics like testing anxiety, self-esteem, resiliency & general anxiety management.
 - Send a monthly newsletter to all IU Southeast nursing students that offers information and tips on studying, anxiety management & improving mental health.
 - Have ongoing communication and partnership between the designated nursing counselor and the IU Southeast School of Nursing faculty.
 - Establish a peer mentoring program between the Sophomore, Junior & Senior nursing students at IU Southeast.

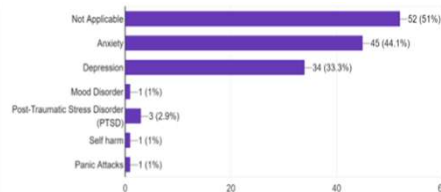
Survey Results

There were 102 nursing student responses to the online survey open from 9/22/20-10/13/20.

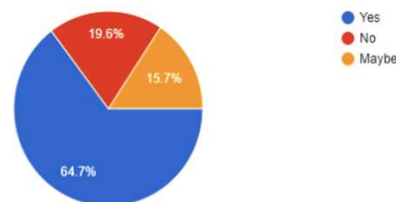
48% of nursing students have a history of a mental disorder



44% have a history of anxiety



65% have test anxiety



Currently only 6% of students use counselling as a coping mechanism

88% of nursing students are open to using counseling as a coping mechanism

Conclusion/ Evaluation

Counselor Meeting

- The senior nursing students met with the Indiana University Southeast counseling department to discuss the results of the student's research
- A detailed PowerPoint was presented with information over personal experience, data collection, survey results, interventions, and expectations
- A counselor was appointed as a liaison to keep up communication between the nursing faculty and the counseling department

Results

- A counselor will be appointed specifically for the school of nursing
- The counselor will have an office in the same building for ease and comfort of the students
- The counselors will have multiple, optional, educational sessions for the students throughout the semester
 - Sessions will cover topics requested by students per class
- The mentor groups will be set up and run by the students in the upcoming semester

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