A systematic review to identify the outcomes and results of spiritual care education provided to healthcare professionals

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Review questions
- Which training objectives can be identified?
- Which methods are applied in teaching spiritual care?
- Which performance assessment/course evaluation methods are used?
- Which predicted outcomes or/and measured results based on course evaluation, performance assessment, or other effectiveness markers can be outlined?

Literature search
Original Papers in English & German
Population: Undergraduate and postgraduate healthcare professionals, who provide their services within the field of medical care.
Intervention: Any form of spiritual care education provided to healthcare professionals in academic or clinical settings.
Comparison: Educational goals and teaching methods.
Objective: To outline the predicted outcomes or/and measured results based on course evaluation, performance assessment, or other effectiveness markers.

Study selection
12529 records identified through database searching
4912 records after duplicates removed
752 records screened
690 records excluded
62 full-text articles assessed for eligibility
16 articles excluded based on consensus
46 studies included in final synthesis

Results
The main objectives
- developing trainees’ sensitivity towards their own spirituality
- clarifying the role of spirituality in healthcare
- preparing trainees for spiritual encounters

Teaching methods
lectures, presentations, learning through dialogue, non-verbal approaches, multimedia learning, spiritual history taking, Verbatim, discussion rounds, problem based learning, assigned readings, written assignments, role plays, simulation, retreat, mentoring, guest speakers, fieldtrips, practical experience

Performance assessment
37% (n=17) performance assessment conducted
59% (n=27) no performance assessment
20% (n=9) competencies applied in patient care

Course evaluation techniques
58% (n=21) written evaluations
22% (n=8) validated measurement tools
19% (n=7) oral feedback

Advantages in individual approach
awareness about spirituality
recognition of individual spirituality
broadened professional scope
understanding the need for sensitivity towards the diversity of beliefs among the patients/families
how to relate more meaningfully to patient/family
see the relevance of spiritual history taking
rise in (self-estimated) spiritual care competencies

Advantages in clinical care practice
success in integrating a spiritual care plan
increase in pastoral care calls
increase in filed reports about spiritual questions and needs in patients
utilization of spiritual screening tools
increase in multidisciplinary spiritual care provision
better working atmosphere

Any further questions?
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Databases
The Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials
MEDLINE (1946 to 2013 Week 27)
PSYCINFO (to 2013 Week 27)
EMBASE (1974 to 2013 Week 27)
CINAHL (to 2013 Week 27)
ATLA (1949 - May 2013)
Web of Knowledge/Science (to 2013 Week 27)
ERIC (1966 to Week 27 2013)
Assia (1987 to 2013 Week 27)
Social Service Abstracts (1979 to 2013 Week 27)