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Student nurses, stigma and infectious diseases: A mixed methods study

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Individuals or groups will form impressions of another based upon a series of traits, which may be relied upon when forming behavior pattern towards others. These traits will depict the reception individuals received within healthcare and may depend upon learnt and inherited 'perceived' ideals affecting the working and personal relationships experienced by healthcare workers with a positive diagnosis of infection, predisposing stigma responses to others. A longitudinal exploratory study was undertaken over three years investigating the potential existence of stigmatizing values from student nurses towards positively diagnosed healthcare workers with Pulmonary Tuberculosis (PTB), Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), *Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA), Hepatitis C and Diabetes type-2, was undertaken. The mixed methods used to analyze data provided an interpretive exploration of the stigmatizing attitudes and values of 482 student nurses undertaking an education program. Interpretation of the findings explored the participants' views at course commencement, midpoint and completion considering variables of education (theoretical and clinical), personal and professional influences. Principle component analysis of the data provided components for three ANOVA's and the within-subjects repeated measures showed little significance between disease groups. Further qualitative data was analyzed to provide interpretation of these results demonstrating the presence of stigma. Therefore, the study recommends the implementation of a longitudinal education model for all healthcare workers, considering disease processes and influencing factors psychologically, socially and physically, which will provide opportunities to reduce the existence of stigmatization for positively diagnosed healthcare workers.

Biography

Nichola Ashby is an Assistant Professor of the University of Nottingham, School of Health Sciences, UK. As a Nurse, she is the lead within the School for Critical Care and Major Trauma. She undertook her PhD at the University of Birmingham and looked at stigma and iatrogenic disease, focusing on healthcare workers attitudes and values towards others within the profession. Her research interests are the perceptions, values and attitudes of healthcare workers towards sepsis and infection. She works actively within national policy development for critical care and major trauma and is a Clinical Expert for the National Institute of Clinical Excellence. She is also a steering group Committee Member for the Royal College of Nursing Critical Care and in Flight Nursing.

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