

TITLE: PERCEPTION OF NURSING UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS ABOUT THE HEALTH CARE-ASSOCIATED INFECTIONS

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INSTITUTION: INSTITUTO SUPERIOR DE GOIAS – IESGO, FORMOSA, SP. (AVENIDA BRASÍLIA, 2001, CEP 73.813-010, FORMOSA-GO, BRAZIL).

ABSTRACT:

The health care-associated infections (HAI) are implicated in human and financial costs and their prevention and control are imperative. The attention to simple preventive strategies, such as hand washing, good practices in procedures and proper use of personal protective equipment are essential to prevent the HAI. In fact, the implementation of hospital infection control committees is mandatory to deal to these infections. To be successful, the infection control programs need to be supported by administrators and all the health workers. The nurse staffing is involved in development and implementation of these programs, however, previous studies shown that these professional's knowledge about HAI and its prevention are scarce. Therefore, the aim of these study was to verify the perception of nursing students of a college in Goiás state, Brazil, about HAI and its dealing. A questionnaire was applied to students from the fourth to seventh period and included questions about HAI definition, prevention, dealing and hospital infection control committees. There were 57 students who accept to answer the questionnaire. The majority of the students was female (86%) and the mean age was 23.5 ± 6 years. 12.3% of the students are already working on the health field, as nursing or pharmacy assistants and caregiver of the elderly. Although most of the students considered the nurse staffing as essential in HAI prevention (94.7%), only 7% was able to define HAI correctly. Hand washing was mentioned by 71% of the participants as an important practice to avoid HAI. The use of gloves and proper sterilization of materials were cited as well. Furthermore, 71.9% of the students did not know the hospital infection control committees. The role of nursing staffing the hospital infection control committees comprises the planning and implementation of preventive strategies, as well providing educational programs when necessary. However, in this study, the majority of the participants just cited implementation and supervision of the healthcare workers as roles of nursing staffing. These results shown that the students may be not properly prepared to deal to HAI and educational strategies about these infections should be improved even

in graduation, in order to form professionals that have the ability to prevent, identify and deal to this important problem that affects hospitals worldwide.

Keywords: health care-associated infections, education, nursing, prevention.