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Staff Education to Facilitate Patient Medication Adherence Among Schizophrenia Patients

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College of Nursing

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Fri Fon

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Walden University
2025

Executive Summary: Staff Education Project

Staff Education to Facilitate Patient Medication Adherence Among Schizophrenia

Patients

by

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MS, Walden University, 2022

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Executive Summary Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Summary

Mental health practice has been characterized by a lack of adherence by schizophrenic patients after receiving a prescription for medication. The organization determined that there was a need for a staff education program on educating patients on complying with their medication order. The practice-focused question was as follows: Will there be a change in knowledge by staff participants as shown by a pretest and posttest situation? The purpose of this DNP project was to plan, implement, and evaluate a staff education program for nurses on schizophrenia patient medication compliance. The program was presented to seven nurses. Descriptive analysis of the pretest showed scores ranged from 60% to 70% with a mean of 62.3%. The posttest scores ranged from 80% to 100% with a mean of 90%. Test results showed a positive percent change in knowledge from pretest to posttest of 44.4%, which supports the evidence that when a staff education program on schizophrenia medication adherence is implemented, nurses' knowledge improves. Such nursing education can improve patients' experiences with schizophrenia, mitigate instances of relapses, optimize patient safety, and enhance professionalism in patient management. Positive social change can benefit the patient, family, and organization through improved patient well-being.

Background

Over the years, mental health practice has been characterized by a lack of compliance by schizophrenic patients after receiving a prescription for medication when discharged from the hospital (Kim et al., 2020). This issue has adversely affected the quality of experience and treatment outcomes among schizophrenia patients in my organization, an outpatient mental health clinic a similar challenge exists. Many patients

diagnosed with schizophrenia struggle with medication adherence postdischarge, leading to increased relapse rates and hospital readmissions. This recurring issue has highlighted the need for enhanced patient education to improve compliance. The identified practice problem was the need for a staff education program on educating schizophrenic patients on medication compliance

The project question was as follows: Will there be a change in knowledge among staff participants as shown by a pretest and posttest situation?

The program evaluation question was as follows: How will the participants evaluate the project relative to the objectives and curriculum?

The purpose of this DNP project was to plan, implement and evaluate a staff education program for nurses on schizophrenia patient medication compliance.

Summary of the Evidence

This issue has adversely affected the quality of experience and treatment outcomes among schizophrenia patients and should be addressed within the context of nursing practice (Zhu et al., 2023), thus improving experiences of patients with schizophrenia, mitigating instances of relapse, optimizing patient safety, and enhancing professionalism in patient management (Guo et al., 2023).

While evidence has shown that knowledge-based education helps to improve medication adherence for schizophrenia patients (Cahaya et al., 2022; Guo et al., 2023; Zhu et al., 2023), patient education depends on the knowledge of the practitioners (Guo et al., 2023). Studies have ascertained how educational interventions assist in building the competence of nurses and other healthcare professionals to guarantee and support medication adherence among patients with schizophrenia (Harmanci & Budak, 2021).

Nurses who are educated regarding these issues are in a better position to assist patients (Guo et al., 2023). Furthermore, Guo et al. (2023) concluded that practitioners must understand the factors that shape schizophrenia medication adherence, thus allowing them to effectively educate and inform patients about the measures to optimize medication adherence.

Staff Education Project Development

The development of the education project was based on the Johns Hopkins evidence-based practice model (see Dang et al., 2021) and followed the Walden University DNP Project Process Guide – Project Management Approach. A site agreement meeting with my project mentor, administrator, and faculty advisor was held. The site agreement was approved, and the project commenced according to the Walden process. As part of the initial phase, an organizational readiness, stakeholder analysis, and a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats analysis were conducted to assess the feasibility and potential impact of the project. Following these assessments, the project questions were developed, which was followed by a comprehensive review and analysis of evidence-based literature supporting the identified problem and the proposed educational program. The curriculum and pretest/posttest were developed and approved by the content expert, after which the education PowerPoint was developed. Upon final approval of all the project materials by the team and ethics pledge given, the program was implemented.

The educational program involved seven nurses who voluntarily accepted the invitation to participate. The project mentor was present for education. At the beginning,

a pretest was given, which was followed by the implementation of the staff education program involving the mentor handing out the paper copies of the education slides.

The educational program involved seven nurses who voluntarily accepted the invitation to participate. The project mentor was present to facilitate the session and provide support. The education program was conducted in a single 90-minute session. At the beginning of the session, a pretest was administered to assess baseline knowledge. The mentor then handed out printed copies of the educational slides and facilitated the discussion throughout the session. After reviewing the information from the PowerPoint handouts, a posttest was conducted to determine if there had been a change in knowledge.

Results

Analysis of the pretest to posttest scores showed there was a positive change in knowledge among nursing staff after implementation of the educational program. The pretest scores ranged between 60% to 70% with a mean of 62.3%. The posttest scores ranged from 80% to 100% with a mean of 90%. The percentage change from pretest to posttest was 44.4% (see Table 1).

Table 1*Change in Knowledge From Pretest to Posttest*

Student number	Pretest score number (%)	Posttest score number (%)	Change in percent
1	6(60%)	8(80%)	33.33%
2	6(60%)	8(80%)	33.33%
3	7(70%)	10(100%)	42.9%
4	6(60%)	9(90%)	50%
5	7(70%)	10(100%)	42.9%
6	6(60%)	9(90%)	50%
7	6(60%)	9(90%)	50%
Group Range Pretest		60% - 70%	
Group Range Posttest		80%-100%	
Group Mean Pretest		62.3%	
Group Mean Posttest		90%	
Percent Change in Knowledge		44.4%	

Figure 1 shows the trend in change for each nurse while Figure 2 shows the trend in change across all 10 questions.

Figure 1

Pretest and Posttest Score Trend Among the Nurses

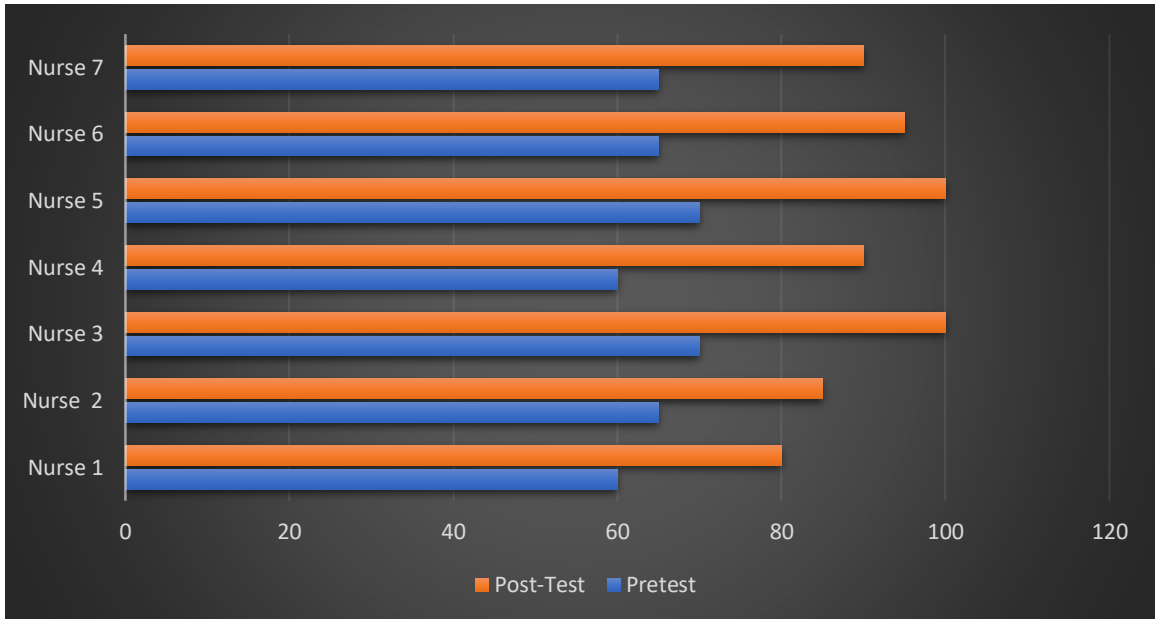
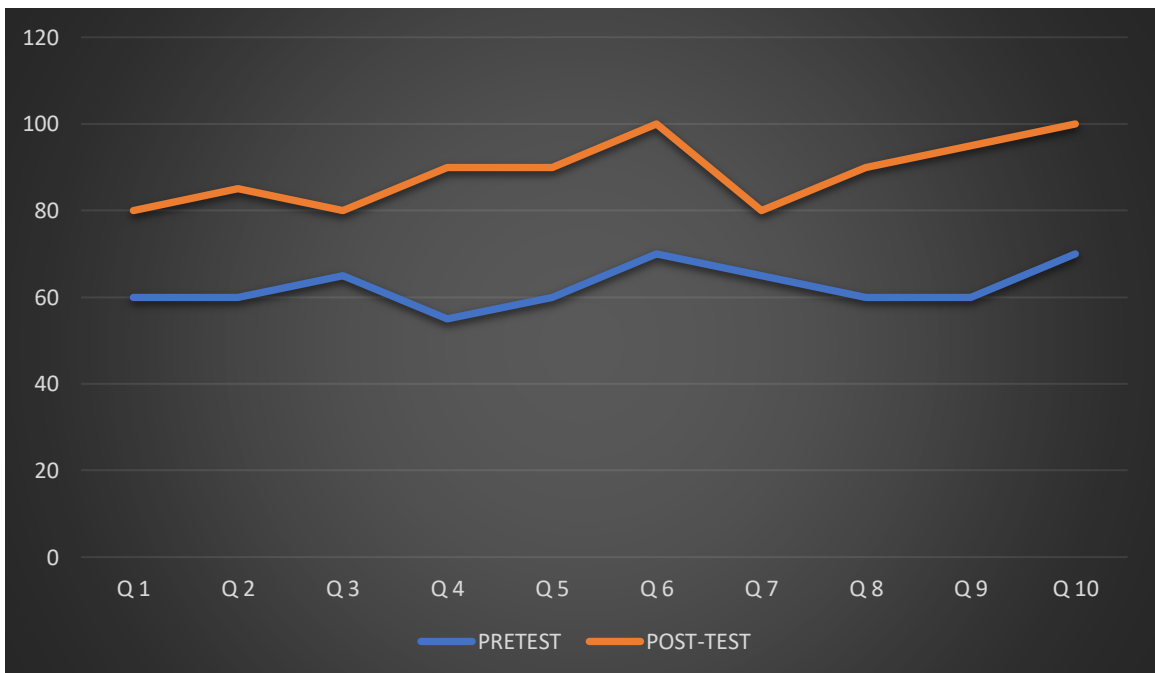


Figure 2

Pretest and Posttest Score Trend Across Assessment Questions



Additionally, an evaluation of the program was conducted after a month to assess participants' perceptions of the education relative to the objectives. The participants were asked to evaluate the curriculum objectives. The dichotomous scale of *met* = 1 and *not met* = 2 was used to evaluate whether a specific objective had been fulfilled. All seven participants scored the five objectives as “met,” resulting in a 100% result.

Impact of the Project on the Organization

The program may improve the ability of the nurse to facilitate education of patients with schizophrenia, resulting in decreased instances of relapse while optimizing patient safety and enhancing professionalism in patient management.

Limitations

The first limitation of the project was that it was not an in-person education with an instructor but rather a paper format. Therefore, there was no opportunity for discussion and clarification. Secondly the evaluations were not done until later, which might have impacted on the participants' response.

Importance of Project Beyond the Local Site

Medication adherence among schizophrenia patients occurs in different mental healthcare units. For this reason, the outcomes depicted in this project assessment are important beyond the local site. First, this project has shown that staff education can result in improved changes in knowledge, which may have an impact on patient education and outcomes. For this reason, organizations that offer mental healthcare could also consider implementing such a staff education program, which reduces cases of medication nonadherence among schizophrenia patients, thus improving their human condition.

Conclusions

The impact on the organization to improve the outcomes of patients under their care resulting in decreasing relapse, optimizing patient safety, and enhancing professionalism in patient management. Based on the results, when a staff education program effectively tailored to schizophrenia medication adherence is implemented, nurses' knowledge improves. Providing healthcare organizations with mental health nursing units to continuously educate the nurses on medication adherence to optimize medication compliance among schizophrenia patients is recommended.

This project facilitates positive social change implications for patients in schizophrenia management by improving patient outcomes and well-being, thus benefiting the family dynamics. The project impacts diversity, equity, and inclusion through a patient-centered holistic approach to schizophrenia management. For the organization, the program may improve the ability of the nurse to facilitate the education of patients with schizophrenia, resulting in decreased instances of relapse while optimizing patient safety and enhancing professionalism in patient management.

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Appendix A: Knowledge PowerPoint for the Training

Objectives

At the conclusion of this program the participant will be able to:

- ▶ Discuss schizophrenia related to guidelines, symptoms, diagnosis, medication nonadherence.
- ▶ Identify the cultural influences on schizophrenia management.
- ▶ Discuss the implications of socioeconomic status on schizophrenia management.
- ▶ Identify healthy lifestyle improvements that enhance medication adherence in patients with schizophrenia.
- ▶ Determine the significance of follow-up care for patients suffering from schizophrenia.

Schizophrenia Disorder

- ❖ Chronic, severe mental disorder
- ❖ Affects ability to think clearly, manage emotions, make decisions, and relate to others
- ❖ Symptoms – delusions, hallucinations, disorganized thinking, decrease in emotional range, poverty of speech, loss of interest and drive
- ❖ DSM-5 guidelines for diagnosis
- ❖ Common reasons for medication non-adherence
 - ❖ Cognitive symptoms, lack of insight

Cultural Influences on Schizophrenia Management

- ❖ In some cultures
 - ❖ mental illness is highly stigmatized
 - ❖ cultural practices lead to denial of symptoms
 - ❖ contributes to avoidance of treatment
 - ❖ fosters reliance on traditional healers rather than medical care
- ❖ Cultural competence in mental health care
 - ❖ Better outcomes when addressing unique patient needs
 - ❖ Immigrant population

Impact of Cultural Competence on Schizophrenia Management

- ❖ Awareness/respect of cultural backgrounds
 - ❖ improves trust and communication
 - ❖ positively impacts treatment adherence/care outcomes
- ❖ Some Asian cultures may view schizophrenia as a sign of spiritual imbalance, influencing treatment choices.
- ❖ Hispanic cultures do not want to be perceived as mentally ill or weak, and they fear being called “loco” if they exhibit symptoms of schizophrenia

Socioeconomic Factors Impacting Schizophrenia Medication Adherence

- ❖ Effects of socioeconomic factors on schizophrenia treatment and adherence include limited access to healthcare, lack of medication affordability, and housing instability
- ❖ Currently, uninsured persons are about 2.5 times more likely to miss their medications.
- ❖ For this reason, there is a need to provide access to financial assistance programs and community mental health support.
- ❖ Housing services and support for patients with schizophrenia could also eradicate the socioeconomic bottlenecks.

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Lifestyle Factors Worsening Cognitive Symptoms

- ❖ Factors worsening cognitive symptoms and hindering adherence
 1. Poor diet
 2. Lack of exercise
 3. Inadequate sleep worsens cognitive symptoms, making adherence difficult

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Lifestyle Factors Enhancing Medication Adherence

- ❖ Lifestyle factors enhancing medication adherence
 1. Diet
 2. Exercise
 3. Sleep hygiene

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Interventions to Improve Mental and Physical Health of Patients to Shape Adherence

- ❖ Interventions to improve mental & physical health, thus adherence, include the following.
 - Providing patients with simple and sustainable lifestyle recommendations
 - Recommending regular light physical activity
 - Encouraging a balanced diet
 - Fostering the culture of adequate sleep and adherence to a particular routine

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Importance of Follow-up on Medication Adherence

- ❖ Helps in monitoring for side effects to ensure adherence and stability in patients with schizophrenia.
- ❖ Regular follow-up and repeated appointments are crucial to adjust treatment plans
- ❖ Regular follow-up and repeated appointments are also important in ensuring long-term adherence stability.
- ❖ It also helps in preventing medication nonadherence relapse among patients with schizophrenia disorder.

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Implications of Missing Follow-Ups

- ❖ Missing follow-up visits often leads to relapse or worsening of symptoms.
- ❖ To improve consistency in follow-up, practitioners must use care coordination
- ❖ They should also consider digital health tools and community-based support groups.
- ❖ The use of medication reminders via apps could mitigate cases of patients missing follow-up appointments for medication review.
- ❖ Patients who attended regular follow-up visits had a 40% lower risk of hospitalization compared to those who did not

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Appendix B: Pretest-Posttest Questions

TITLE: *A Staff Education Program to Improve Patient Medication Adherence # _____*
DNP Student, Walden University

Purpose: To plan, develop, and implement a staff education program to improve nurses' understanding of schizophrenia and patient medication compliance.

The test on Enhancing Nursing Competency in Schizophrenia Care is anonymous. Please ensure you use the same anonymously assigned number for both the pretest and posttest. Circle the letter of your choice. You have 10 minutes to complete the test.

1. Schizophrenia is:

- a. A personality disorder characterized by mood swings.
- b. A chronic mental health disorder involving delusions, hallucinations, and cognitive impairment.
- c. A condition caused exclusively by poor parenting.
- d. A temporary mental illness that resolves without treatment.

2. Medication adherence in schizophrenia is important because:

- a. It reduces the risk of relapse.
- b. It improves the patient's quality of life.
- c. It decreases hospitalization rates.
- d. All the above.

3. Symptoms of schizophrenia include:

- a. Impulsivity and hyperactivity.
- b. Delusions, hallucinations, and disorganized thinking.
- c. Excessive energy and lack of sleep.
- d. Persistent sadness and loss of interest.
- e. Despite my experience and knowledge, I have no idea about the issue being asked in the question.

4. What is a common barrier to medication adherence in schizophrenia?

- a. Cultural beliefs about mental illness.
- b. Lack of patient education.
- c. Medication side effects.
- d. All the above.

5. When planning care for a patient with schizophrenia, it is essential to:

- a. Focus only on pharmacological treatment.
- b. Consider cultural beliefs and attitudes toward mental health.
- c. Avoid involving family members in the treatment plan.
- d. Ignore the patient's dietary habits.
- e. Despite my experience and knowledge, I have no idea about the issue being asked in the question.

6. A healthy lifestyle improvement to enhance medication adherence may include:

- a. Regular exercise and balanced nutrition.
- b. Ignoring sleep hygiene.
- c. Relying solely on alternative medicine.
- d. Avoiding all social interactions.
- e. Despite my experience and knowledge, I have no idea about the issue being asked in the question.

7. What is the role of follow-up care for patients with schizophrenia?

- a. To ensure medication adherence and address concerns.
- b. To reinforce education on symptom management.

- c. To provide consistent monitoring and support.
- d. All the above.

8. Cultural influences on schizophrenia management may involve:

- a. Beliefs about mental illness as a spiritual condition.
- b. Preference for traditional remedies over pharmacological treatments.
- c. Stigma and lack of open communication.
- d. All the above.

9. Medication adherence in schizophrenia has no impact on patient outcomes.

- a. True
- b. False
- c. Despite my experience and knowledge, I have no idea about the issue being asked in the question.

10. Education for nurses about schizophrenia care:

- a. Improves patient-centered care and medication adherence.
- b. Has no impact on medication adherence.
- c. Is only helpful for new nursing staff.
- d. Focuses solely on symptom management, not on adherence.
- e. Despite my experience and knowledge, I have no idea about the issue being asked in the question.

THE END: THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN MY DNP PROJECT

Answer Key for the Questions

1. B
2. D
3. B
4. D
5. B
6. A
7. D
8. D
9. B
10. A