

Eldercare Workforce Crisis, a Literature Review

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According to the U.S. Census Bureau, “the population age 65 and over increased from 37.8 million in 2007 to 50.9 million in 2017 (a 34% increase) and is projected to reach 94.7 million in 2060” (Administration for Community Living, April 2018, p. 1). As the number of older Americans aging, the lack of healthcare professionals that would work with these individuals has become more and more relevant. “Our nation is facing a critical shortage of geriatrics faculty and healthcare professionals across disciplines. This trend must be reversed if we are to provide our seniors with the quality care they need to and deserve,” (American Geriatrics Society, 2019). Nurses are the best positioned to help with this void of clinicians.

OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this research project is to explore the literature for barriers to nursing students’ entering a geriatric field or specializing in geriatric care.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to Dr. Shelley Moore and her help with this project. This would not have been possible without her.

This research project was funded by the MTSU URECA grant program.



Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
Undergraduate Research Center

METHODS

- Develop a research question and a search strategy
- Conduct literature search, keeping documentation of all search activities
- Read the articles and synthesize the information, documenting my work with an annotated bib and literature matrix

RESULTS

Of the articles, three recommended longitudinal studies: Carlson, E. & Idvall, E. 2015, Haron, Y. et al., 2013, and Hovey, S. 2016.

Five recommended larger scale studies: Hammar L. et al., 2016, Hovey, S. (2016), Lowey, S., 2017, Sanders, K. M., 2016, and Sarabia-Cobo C.M. & Pfeiffer, C.C., 2015.

Five recommended a revision or creation of tools for further research: Hammar, L.M. 2016, King, B.J. et al., 2013, Lowey, S., 2017, Neville, C. 2014, and Neville, C. & Dickie, R. 2014.

Finally, one of the studies recommended some various changes including, but not limited to, more gender based studies, personal experience with the elderly, in what year gerontological courses should be implemented, more studies on clinical placements, as well as development, implementation, and evaluation of innovative curriculum activities to increase the knowledge, attitudes, and the practices of undergraduate students: Neville, C. & Dickie, R., 2014.

THEMES DERIVED FROM REVIEW

The themes that were derived from these articles were of careful concern for this crisis. There is an urgency attached with these articles, of course, these articles are from now years ago, and the desired reform has not come out yet.

The other predominant theme from the articles was the focus on the lack of research. Almost every article mentioned that we require further research in this aspect.

CONCLUSIONS

There is a serious lack in research surrounding the eldercare workforce, and further research is needed to see how to solve the eldercare workforce crisis that is currently at America’s doorstep. My further research will focus on instrument design and implementation, in hopes that the future studies done will have better tools to work with so we might be able to collect better information.



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