

## Preparation of nursing professionals to work with patients attempting self-extermination

*Preparación de profesionales de enfermería para trabajar con pacientes que intentan el autoexterminio*

*Preparo dos profissionais de enfermagem para atuar com pacientes em tentativa de autoextermínio*

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### Abstract

The aim was to analyze the training of nursing professionals to work with patients attempting self-extermination. This is documentary research, using the curricular matrices of Public and Private Educational Institutions, still in operation, in which the bachelor's degree in nursing has a grade of 5 in the 2019 National Student Performance Exam. Among the syllabuses available, the topic of suicide is not directly mentioned, there are themes related to communication between nurses, patients, and patients' families. It also includes themes of psychiatric emergencies and the importance of Psychology in the training of Nurses and the practice of Nurses in Mental Health Services. It is noted that teaching in the selected degrees needs special attention in the disciplines of ethics and bioethics, as they do not present a high rate. Mental health subjects, even mentioned in most institutions with an analyzed curriculum, did not present topics related to suicide on the menu, thus harming the training of future professionals.

**Descriptors:** Suicide; Suicide Attempt; Nursing Care; Mental Health; Teaching.

### Resumén

El objetivo fue analizar la formación de los profesionales de enfermería para trabajar con pacientes en intento de autoexterminación. Se trata de una investigación documental, utilizando las matrices curriculares de Instituciones Educativas Públicas y Privadas, aún en funcionamiento, en las que la Licenciatura en Enfermería tiene una calificación de 5 en el Examen Nacional de Rendimiento Estudiantil 2019. Entre los planes de estudios disponibles, destaca El tema del suicidio no se menciona directamente, hay temas relacionados con la comunicación entre enfermeros, pacientes y familiares de los pacientes. También incluye temas de emergencias psiquiátricas y la importancia de la Psicología en la formación de Enfermeros y la práctica de Enfermeros en Servicios de Salud Mental. Se observa que la docencia en las carreras seleccionadas necesita especial atención en las disciplinas de ética y bioética, ya que no presentan una tasa elevada. Las materias de salud mental, incluso mencionadas en la mayoría de las instituciones con currículo analizado, no presentaron temas relacionados al suicidio en el menú, perjudicando así la formación de futuros profesionales.

**Descriptores:** Suicidio; Intento de Suicidio; Cuidado de Enfermería; Salud Mental; Enseñanza.

### Resumo

Objetivou-se analisar a formação dos profissionais de enfermagem para atuar com pacientes em tentativa de autoextermínio. Trata-se de uma pesquisa documental, utilizando as matrizes curriculares de Instituições de Ensino Públicas e Privadas, ainda em atividade, em que o curso de bacharelado em Enfermagem possui nota 5 no Exame Nacional de Desempenho dos Estudantes de 2019. Entre as ementas disponibilizadas, não é citado diretamente o tema suicídio, constam temáticas relacionadas à comunicação entre Enfermeiro, pacientes e família dos pacientes. Consta também temáticas de emergências psiquiátricas e sobre a importância da Psicologia na formação do Enfermeiro e sobre a prática do Enfermeiro em Serviços de Saúde Mental. Nota-se que o ensino nas graduações selecionadas, precisa de atenção especial nas disciplinas de ética e bioética, pois não se apresentam em índice elevado. As disciplinas de saúde mental, mesmo mencionadas na maioria das instituições com grade curricular analisadas, não apresentaram a matéria direcionada ao suicídio na ementa, prejudicando, assim, a formação do futuro profissional.

**Descritores:** Suicídio; Tentativa de Suicídio; Cuidados de Enfermagem; Saúde Mental; Ensino.



## Introduction

Taking as a backdrop a transpandemic context with a focus on mental health based on collective mourning, thousands of losses, changes in routine, sleep, work, life, fear, sadness, anxiety, a general readaptation for everyone the aspects that surround the individual, the terms suicide and self-extermination were extensively listed, and not in the context of training and education, but rather in the format of numbers of attempts and endings of lives.

Are professionals who graduate from graduation qualified to deal with this type of patient? Are they qualified to diagnose the risks of an individual attempting self-extermination? Do they have the technical-scientific knowledge to intervene at the right time, in the right way with the right tools? How are recently trained professionals guiding this individual's family members and support network?

The present study will reflect on these questions based on a documentary analysis, bringing to light the data to be used as a form of new strategies and planning to improve the Curricular Guidelines, professional Nursing training, and, consequently, the health care provided to society.

For research, it is an important source of data that adds relevant content to information, both for analyzing the reality of Nursing care and for clarifying what effective Nursing care is. Patients attempting self-extermination are more and more frequent each year, being received in urgent and emergency care, which is why there is a need for in-depth research on the subject.

It is important for the professional practice of Nursing that education is continued. If the nurse does not have adequate professional qualifications to deal with patients attempting self-extermination, they may be insecure when faced with the situation. This work aims to add knowledge to the practice of these professionals, guiding correct care assistance and criticism of the influence of the curricular structure in the given care circumstance.

Given the above, the objective was to analyze the training of nursing professionals to work with patients attempting self-extermination.

## Methodology

This is documentary research, with a quantitative and qualitative approach. Documentary research is a source of data collection that is restricted to documents, written or not, called what are known as primary sources<sup>1</sup>. Qualitative research deals with phenomena: it provides for hermeneutic analysis of the data collected, and quantitative research deals with facts<sup>2</sup>. In this type of research, therefore, the variables must be rigorously determined, and their measurement must already be presupposed by the method itself, starting from an analysis almost always mediated by some mathematical criterion.

The research, carried out between January and March 2022, included articles, books, and documents, with documents from 2010 to 2019, due to the greater reliability of using documents with recent studies, contributing to the approach being updated on the subject studied.

To select the curricular matrices, Public and Private Educational Institutions were selected, still in operation, which the bachelor's degree in Nursing has a grade of 5 in the National Student Performance Exam (Enade) 2019, the search and selection were carried out by the National Registry of Courses and Higher Education Institutions e-MEC Registration, with a total of 28.

Data present in epidemiological bulletins from the Ministry of Health, in curricular matrices of Nursing courses, and research in scientific articles were analyzed. The data were analyzed according to the qualitative and quantitative approaches.

## Results and Discussion

Social changes happen quickly, making healthcare an environment with different cultures. It is important that, in the training of nursing professionals, there is up-to-date and innovative education, addressing, in addition to professional practice, ethical, social aspects, values, and humanization<sup>3</sup>.

CNE/CES Resolution No. 03, of November 7, 2001, implements standards to be used in the curricula of undergraduate Nursing courses in higher education institutions. It is present in the resolution, skills, and general competencies that the Nursing professional must achieve during graduation: communication, health care, decision-making, leadership, understanding of management, and continuing education. The patient's health-illness process does not only depend on technical assistance, but the Nurse must also have discernment in ethics and bioethics<sup>4</sup>.

It is extremely important that in the professional training of nurses, there is a continuous and comprehensive dialogue about behavior in the face of ethical, cultural, and religious issues and stigmas. The health professional needs to present an ethical stance and critical reflection, seeking an ethical balance in decision-making and moral conflicts. It is also added that education, as a human practice, is a necessary phenomenon and essential social practice that expresses a set of values, meanings, ways of acting, and the mediated relationship between man and space<sup>5,6</sup>.

Literature shows that there is a lack of preparation and little educational contact among nursing professionals with topics directly related to suicide<sup>7</sup>.

An analysis was carried out between the curricula of 28 selected Educational Institutions, looking for subjects in Ethics and Bioethics, and Mental Health, which address the topic of suicide in the Teaching Plan, the analysis is present in Charts 1, 2, 3 and 4. Ao agrupar os dados disponíveis no quadro 1 e 2 podemos observar que 100% disponibilizou a grade curricular para análise, em 7,14% das grades curriculares não consta a disciplina de saúde mental, entre os 92,86% que consta a disciplina de saúde mental, 76,92% não disponibilizou a ementa para demais análises.

Among the menus available, the topic of suicide is not directly mentioned, there are themes related to communication between nurses, patients, and patients' families. It also includes themes of psychiatric emergencies and the importance of Psychology in the training of Nurses and the practice of Nurses in Mental Health Services.



Among the curricula that contain the subject of Mental Health, 88.46% made the workload available,

analyzing the workloads available and generating a Simple Arithmetic Average, reaching a value of 91h.

**Chart 1.** Analysis of the existence of the Mental Health discipline in the curriculum of selected Public Educational Institutions. Paracatu, MG, Brazil, 2010-2019

Educational institution	Course code	Includes the mental health discipline	CH	Syllabus
Universidade De Brasília - UNB	112818	Yes	Not available.	Not available.
Universidade Federal De Sergipe – UFS	302	Yes	45h	Evolution of mental illness, Mental Health Policies, and Psychiatric Reform. Study of the systematization of nursing care for patients with psychiatric disorders.
Universidade Federal De Sergipe – UFS	1108149	Yes	45h	Evolution of mental illness, Mental Health Policies, and Psychiatric Reform. Study of the systematization of nursing care for patients with psychiatric disorders.
Universidade Federal Do Piauí - UFPI	486	Yes	60h	Not available.
Universidade Federal De São Carlos - UFSCAR	626	Yes	90h	Not available.
Universidade Estadual De Londrina - UEL	763	Yes	133h	Organization of Health Services. Application of the Nursing Care methodology in Mental Disorders and Psychiatric Emergencies. National Mental Health Policy. Principles of Interpersonal Relations. Supervised internship in psychiatric care and hospitalization units.
Universidade Estadual Do Ceará - UECE	2192	Yes	Not available.	Not available.
Faculdade De Medicina De São José Do Rio Preto - FAMERP	4721	Yes	90h	It is about the role of Psychology in the training of Nurses.
Faculdade De Medicina De Marília - FAMEMA	8961	Yes	165h	Not available.
Universidade Federal Do Maranhão - UFMA	11436	Yes	75h	Not available.
Universidade Federal Do Rio Grande Do Norte - UFRN	12326	Yes	60h	There are psychological aspects to the nurse's relationship with the patient and family.
Universidade Federal De Minas Gerais - UFMG	12953	Yes	30h	Not available.
Universidade Federal De Alagoas - UFAL	13199	Yes	160h	Not available.
Universidade Federal Da Bahia - UFBA	99032	Yes	136h	Not available.
Universidade Federal De Pernambuco - UFPE	13599	Yes	30h	Nursing care for people with behavioral changes resulting from mental disorders. psychiatric urgencies and emergencies.
Universidade Federal De Santa Maria - UFSM	13865	Yes	60h	Includes therapeutic communication and Mental Health Interventions.

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Universidade Federal Do Ceará - UFC	13994	Yes	128h	It includes Nurse-client Communication and Therapeutic Relationships. Main psychiatric disorders and nurses' role.
Universidade Federal De São Paulo - UNIFESP	14567	Yes	124h	Not available.
Universidade Federal Do Estado Do Rio De Janeiro - UNIRIO	15782	Yes	Not available.	Not available.
Fundação Universidade Federal De Ciências Da Saúde De Porto Alegre - UFCSA	116588	Yes	90h	Not available.
Universidade Estadual Do Piauí - UESPI	19090	Yes	120h	Not available.
Universidade Federal De Campina Grande - UFCG	1134328	Yes	60h	Includes Psychiatric Reform Process; Brazilian mental health public policies at the federal, state and municipal levels. Mental health prevention and promotion strategies for the individual, family and community. Mental health-illness process from a biopsychosocial and cultural perspective. Nurse practice in mental health network services.
Universidade Do Estado Do Amazonas - UEA	60656	Yes	90h	Not available.
Escola Superior De Ciências Da Saúde - ESCS	123083	Not included.	--	--
Fundação Universidade Federal Do Vale Do São Francisco - UNIVASF	74060	Yes	120h	Not available.

**Chart 2.** Analysis of the existence of the Mental Health discipline in the curriculum of selected Private Education Institutions. Paracatu, MG, Brazil, 2010-2019

Educational institution	Course code	Includes the mental health discipline	CH	Syllabus
Pontifícia Universidade Católica Do Rio Grande Do Sul - PUCRS	19334	Yes	60h	Not available.
Centro Universitário De Jaguariúna - UniFAJ	50829	No	--	--
Centro Universitário Da Grande Fortaleza - UNIGRANDE	71267	Yes	120h	Not available.

**Chart 3.** Analysis of the existence of the Ethics and Bioethics discipline in the curriculum of selected Public Educational Institutions. Paracatu, MG, Brazil, 2010-2019

Educational institution	Course code	Includes the ethics and bioethics discipline	CH	Syllabus
Universidade De Brasília - UNB	112818	Yes	Not available.	Not available.
Universidade Federal De Sergipe - UFS	302	Yes	60h	History of nursing and the social context: study of the ethical-legal aspects that guide the nursing profession, through the code of ethics for nursing professionals; COFEN resolutions and other relevant legislation; bioethical issues and dilemmas that permeate



				the practice of the nursing team in the different phases of the life cycle; ethnic-racial education in human rights and class associations in nursing.
Universidade Federal De Sergipe – UFS	1108149	Yes	60h	History of nursing and the social context: study of the ethical-legal aspects that guide the nursing profession, through the code of ethics for nursing professionals; COFEN resolutions and other relevant legislation; bioethical issues and dilemmas that permeate the practice of the nursing team in the different phases of the life cycle; ethnic-racial education in human rights and class associations in nursing.
Universidade Federal Do Piauí - UFPI	486	Not included.	--	--
Universidade Federal De São Carlos - UFSCAR	626	Not included.	--	--
Universidade Estadual De Londrina - UEL	763	Yes	86h	Includes ethical aspects related to the hospitalization situation.
Universidade Estadual Do Ceará - UECE	2192	Yes	Not available.	Not available.
Faculdade De Medicina De São José Do Rio Preto - FAMERP	4721	Yes	60h	It contains Fundamentals of traditional ethics professional ethics and ethical behavior around health and Professional Responsibility. Code of Ethics and Professional Nursing Legislation in Brazil. Ethical and legal infraction in nursing. Penalties. Code of ethical process in nursing.
Faculdade De Medicina De Marília - FAMEMA	8961	Yes	30h	Not available.
Universidade Federal Do Maranhão - UFMA	11436	Yes	45h	Not available.
Universidade Federal Do Rio Grande Do Norte - UFRN	12326	Yes	45h	Ethics and bioethics: concepts and foundations /Socio-historical character of ethics and morals; Professional ethics and the nursing code of ethics; Self-care for the care of others from an ethical perspective.
Universidade Federal De Minas Gerais - UFMG	12953	Not included.	--	--
Universidade Federal De Alagoas - UFAL	13199	Not included.	--	--
Universidade Federal Da Bahia - UFBA	99032	Not included.	--	--
Universidade Federal De Pernambuco - UFPE	13599	Yes	45h	It contains the ethical-philosophical bases of care focused on the health-disease process. Investigation of the origin, conceptions and modes of human existence and care from the perspective of a philosophical anthropology.
Universidade Federal De Santa Maria - UFSM	13865	Not included.	--	--
Universidade Federal Do Ceará - UFC	13994	Yes	64h	It contains Basic foundations of the study of ethics. Nursing within the scope of ethics and bioethics. Legislation on professional practice and nursing education.
Universidade Federal De São Paulo - UNIFESP	14567	Yes	36h	Not available.
Universidade Federal Do Estado Do Rio De Janeiro - UNIRIO	15782	Not included.	--	--
Fundação Universidade Federal De Ciências Da	116588	Yes	30h	Not available.

Saúde De Porto Alegre – UFCSPA				
Universidade Estadual Do Piauí - UESPI	19090	Yes	45h	Not available.
Universidade Federal De Campina Grande - UFCG	1134328	Yes	60h	Bioethics and its universal principles. Ethics and Bioethics in Nursing. Rights of Nurses and Patients. Ethical and legal aspects of nursing practice. Law on the professional practice of Nursing. Code of ethics of nursing professionals. Resolutions of the Federal Nursing Council. Ethical Dilemmas and Ethical Process.
Universidade Do Estado Do Amazonas - UEA	60656	Yes	45h	Not available.
Escola Superior De Ciências Da Saúde - ESCS	123083	Not included.	--	--
Fundação Universidade Federal Do Vale Do São Francisco - UNIVASF	74060	Yes	60h	Not available.

**Chart 4.** Analysis of the existence of the Ethics and Bioethics discipline in the curriculum of selected Private Education Institutions. Paracatu, MG, Brazil, 2010-2019

Educational institution	Course code	Includes the ethics and bioethics discipline	CH	Syllabus
Pontifícia Universidade Católica Do Rio Grande Do Sul – PUCRS	19334	Yes	60h	Not available.
Centro Universitário De Jaguariúna – UniFAJ	50829	Not included.	--	--
Centro Universitário Da Grande Fortaleza – UNIGRANDE	71267	Yes	80h	Not available.

When grouping the data available in Charts 3 and 4, 100% made their curriculum available for analysis, in 32.14% of the curriculum there is no subject of ethics and bioethics, among the 67.86% that does the discipline of ethics and bioethics, 52.63% did not make the syllabus available for other analyzes.

Among the syllabuses available are Studies of the ethical-legal aspects that guide the Nursing profession, through the code of ethics for Nursing professionals; foundations of traditional ethics and professional ethics; ethical behavior in the health sector; professional responsibility; the care of oneself for the care of others from an ethical perspective; rights of nurses and patients; ethical dilemmas and resolutions of the Federal Nursing Council.

Among the curricula that contain the discipline of ethics and bioethics, 89.47% made the workload available, analyzing the workloads available and generating a Simple Arithmetic Average, reaching a value of 54h.

In addition to the issue of the principles of ethics and bioethics, respect for life, and proper assistance to psychiatric patients in urgency and emergency units, it is necessary to contain everything mentioned in the menus, however, it is not enough to simply assist after an attempt at self-extermination. Many other factors affect the care provided to this patient, such as establishing strategies to prevent recurrence. There are many health technologies today that need to be included in the knowledge passed

during professional training, supporting a good scenario of expertise for decision-making processes that aim not only at immediate assistance, but also at monitoring, health promotion, and prevention of new outbreaks and episodes<sup>8</sup>.

It is necessary to emphasize that nurses must have the technical-scientific knowledge to promote health, prevent injuries, and rehabilitate the individual's health. He needs to know to act with the utmost care, diagnosing all possible risk factors, providing health education for his patient and his family/friends, and his support network. In this context, Higher Education Institutions have great responsibility when developing their guidelines and menus, as a menu that does not train and qualify a professional to deal with a high-risk patient for attempted self-extermination puts the patient's own life at risk. Today, there are many tools that professionals can use, whether to train during an undergraduate course, postgraduate studies, free courses, or technological resources to monitor that patient's mental health. In other words, the Nursing professional needs to have good training and continue training to offer the best assistance possible<sup>9</sup>.

#### Final Considerations

When analyzing the training of Nursing professionals to work with patients attempting self-extermination, it is noted that teaching in the selected degrees needs special attention in the disciplines of ethics



and bioethics, as they do not present a high rate. Mental health subjects, even mentioned in most institutions with an analyzed curriculum, did not present topics related to suicide on the menu, thus harming the training of future professionals.

The research was based on the hypothesis that Nursing care does not have adequate training to deal with patients attempting self-extermination and that the working hours and the tumultuous environment present in an Urgency and Emergency unit do not allow for the adequate creation of bonds, presenting difficulties in dealing with these patients, therefore, the hypothesis was confirmed.

The research sought to answer what nursing care should be like in urgent and emergency care with patients attempting self-extermination, showing that care should come from the result of knowledge acquired from

professional training. The Nursing professional must be aware of the importance of an appropriate approach to the patient's acceptance of treatment. And that this approach includes quality clinical and technical care, which is why it is so important to have a humanized, ethical stance, in legal aspects without prejudice and inverted priorities according to the definition itself.

The research limitation faced was the lack of dissemination of the syllabi for the disciplines of ethics and bioethics, and mental health by the selected institutions.

It is also clear that there is a lack of teaching strategies in undergraduate Nursing institutions; it is important to address the themes of Ethics and Bioethics and Mental Health concerning care and communication with patients whose mental health is weakened.

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