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RËNDËSIA E EDUKIMIT PROFESIONAL TË PERSONELIT INFERMIEROR PËR NJË KUJDES SHËNDETËSOR SA MË CILËSOR

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Abstrakt

Hyrje. Zhvillimi profesional i vazhdueshëm i infermierëve (ZHPV) përmirëson cilësinë e kujdesit infermieror, sigurinë e pacientëve, kënaqësinë e infermierëve dhe kostot e kujdesit shëndetësor, dhe mbi të gjitha ndikon në rritjen dhe përmirësimin e vazhdueshëm të cilësisë së shërbimeve të ofruara ndaj pacientit/qytetarit. Megjithatë, evidencat tregojnë se infermierët jo gjithmonë marrin pjesë në mënyrë aktive në aktivitete të zhvillimit të vazhdueshëm profesional, si dhe jo gjithmonë këto aktivitete të edukimit të vazhduar adresojnë nevojat reale të infermierëve¹.

Qëllimi/Materiali dhe Metoda. Ky punim ka si qëllim të paraqesë një vlerësim në lidhje me përfshirjen e personelit infermieror në aktivitetet e edukimit të vazhduar profesional si një nga komponentët me të rëndësishëm për një performancë sa më të mirë kundrejt një kujdesi shëndetësor cilësor. Për realizimin e këtij punimi të dhënat janë mbledhur dhe analizuar nga databaza aktuale për personelin infermieror në vendin tonë, bazuar në programin e edukimit të vazhdueshëm për ricertifikimin periodik të tyre.

Rezultatet dhe diskutimet. Në përputhje me rregulloret dhe legjislacionin aktual, brenda një cikli individual 5-vjeçar infermierët e mamitë duhet të mbledhin një numër jo më të vogël se 50 kredite. Aktualisht Shqipëria numëron mbi 12.100 infermierë në sektorin publik dhe 1300 në sektorin privat, ndërsa 6.792 është numri i infermierëve në shërbimin parësor.

Konkluzione. Edukimi profesional i personelit infermieror dhe përditësimi me kërkimet më të fundit mjekësore ndihmon në zhvillimin e ekspertizës në fusha të specializuara, rrit mundësitë e punësimit të infermierëve dhe ofron siguri në praktikën e tyre të përdishme si për pacientët ashtu edhe për mjekët duke mundësuar ofrimin e një shërbimi sa më cilësor në të gjitha nivelet e kujdesit shëndetësor. Prandaj nëpërmjet programeve trajnuese do të forcohet roli i ri infermieror duke rritur aftësitë dhe kapacitetet e tyre profesionale.

Fjalë çelës: *Edukimi profesional, kujdes infermieror cilësor*

1. Flaubert JL, Le Menestrel S, Williams DR, et al., (2021). *National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine; National Academy of Medicine; Committee on the Future of Nursing 2020–2030; The Future of Nursing 2020-2030: Charting a Path to Achieve Health Equity*. Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US); 2021 May 11. 4, *The Role of Nurses in Improving Health Care Access and Quality*. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK573910/>

THE IMPORTANCE OF PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION OF THE NURSING STAFF FOR HIGHER QUALITY IN HEALTHCARE

Abstract

Introduction. Continuing professional development of nurses (CPD) improves the quality of nursing care, patient safety, nurse satisfaction and health care costs, and above all effects on increasing the continuous improvement of the health care quality services provided to the patient/citizen. However, evidences indicate that nurses do not always actively participate in continuing professional development activities, and these activities do not always address the real needs of nurses¹.

Purpose / Material and Method. The purpose of this paper is to present an evaluation regarding the involvement of nursing staff in continuing professional education activities as one of the most important components for a better performance and higher quality health care. The data were collected and analyzed from the current database for the nursing staff in our country, based on the continuous education program for their periodic recertification.

Results and discussions. Based on current regulations and legislation, nurses and midwives must collect at least more than 50 credits within an individual 5-year cycle. Actually Albania counts over 12,100 nurses in the public sector and 1,300 in the private sector, while 6,792 nurses work in the primary service.

Conclusions. Professional education of nursing staff and staying up-to-date with the latest medical research helps developing expertise in specialized areas, increases the employment opportunities of nurses and ensures safety in their daily practice for both patients and practitioners by providing higher quality service at all levels of health care setting. Therefore, through training programs, the new role nursing staff will be strengthened by increasing their professional skills and capacities.

Key words: *Professional education, quality nursing care*

1. Flaubert JL, Le Menestrel S, Williams DR, et al., (2021). *National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine; National Academy of Medicine; Committee on the Future of Nursing 2020–2030; The Future of Nursing 2020-2030: Charting a Path to Achieve Health Equity*. Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US); 2021 May 11. 4, *The Role of Nurses in Improving Health Care Access and Quality*. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK573910/>

Hyrje

Continuing professional development of nurses (CPD) improves the quality of nursing care, patient safety, nurse satisfaction and health care costs, and above all effects on increasing the continuous improvement of the health care quality services provided to the patient/citizen. However, evidences indicate that nurses do not always actively participate in continuing professional development activities, and these activities do not always address the real needs of nurses¹. (Flaubert JL, Le Menestrel S, Williams DR, et al.,2021).

In Albania, continuous professional development is already a norm for health care professionals. It is an important condition for the successful fulfillment of their mission in providing quality health care services in accordance with contemporary standards. The continuing education system started since 2008, has been further consolidated and improved. Over the years, several improvements and changes have been made to the legal framework that have affected both health professionals in the certification process and providers in the accreditation process of continuous education activities.

For nurses, as for doctors, it is equally important to improve and update their knowledge and skills through continuing education programs. The nurses were included in the certification program since 2016. This innovation of the continuing education system will serve the development and strengthening of nursing care, which is of particular importance. The functioning and improvement of the continuing education system in Albania is based on a closed collaboration of the Ministry of Health and Social Protection and the NCCE with all other important actors in this field, such as the Orders and associations of professionals, academic and health institutions. Through this comprehensive process, it has become possible to adapt and implement the necessary procedures, criteria and standards of accreditation of continuing education activities and certification of health professionals.

Material and Method.

The aim of this paper is to present an assessment regarding the involvement of nursing personnel in continuing professional education activities as one of the most important components for a better performance and quality of health care providing. For the realization of this paper, the data were collected and analyzed from the different sources as national and international literature, current database for the nursing staff in our country, based on the continuous education program for their periodic recertification.

Results and discussions.

In accordance with current regulations and legislation, within an individual 5-year cycle, nurses and midwives must collect a number of no less than 50 credits. Currently, Albania counts over 12,100 nurses in the public sector and 1,300 in the private sector, while 6,792 are the number of nurses in the primary health care service (UISH, 2024).

Table 1. Number of registered professionals by profession for 2018

PROFESSION	Number of professionals at the end of 2018		
	Active	Non-Active	Total
Medical Doctor	6,222	939	7,120
Dentist	2,973	392	3,259
Pharmacist	3,125	165	3,338
Nurse & Midwife	22,769	248	22,864
Total	35,089	1,744	36,581

As it can be seen from Table 1, which presents the detailed number of professionals by profession. At the end of 2018, the number of registered professionals reached 36,822, of which 1,681 were non-active professionals. The group of non-active professionals includes those professionals who are in the specialization period, with a report of maternity leave or separation from work for a period of time of more than 4 months, as well as all those who have suspended their permission to practice the profession according to the relevant professional order.

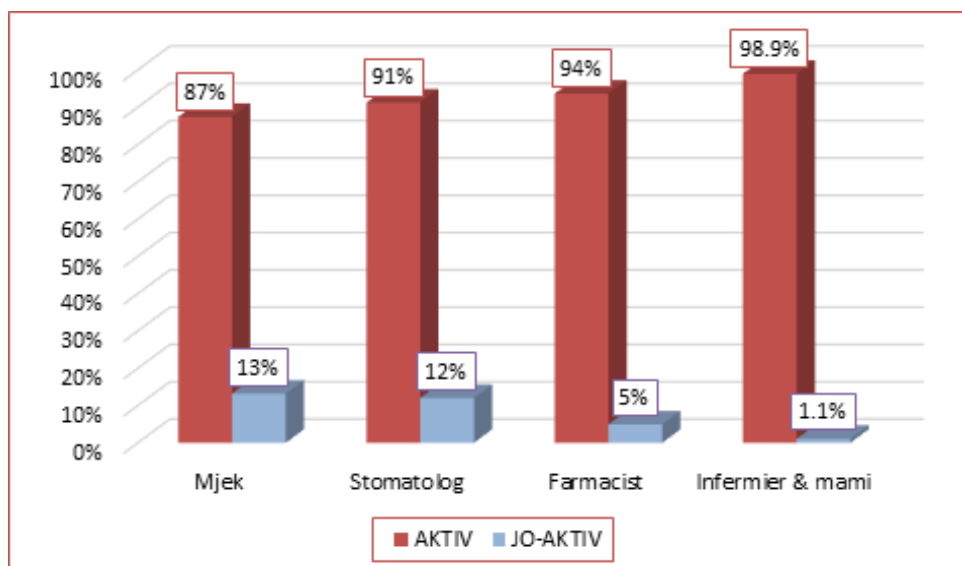


Chart 1. Grouping of professionals at the end of 2018 by status

As can be seen from the above chart, the nurse-midwife group has the highest percentage with active status 98.9% and the lowest percentage with inactive status 1.1% of the total number of this group. This trend is decreasing, following by pharmacists 94% active and 5% inactive, then with dentists with 91% active and 12% inactive and with the lowest percentage compared to other categories, the category of doctors' results with 87 % active and 13% inactive.

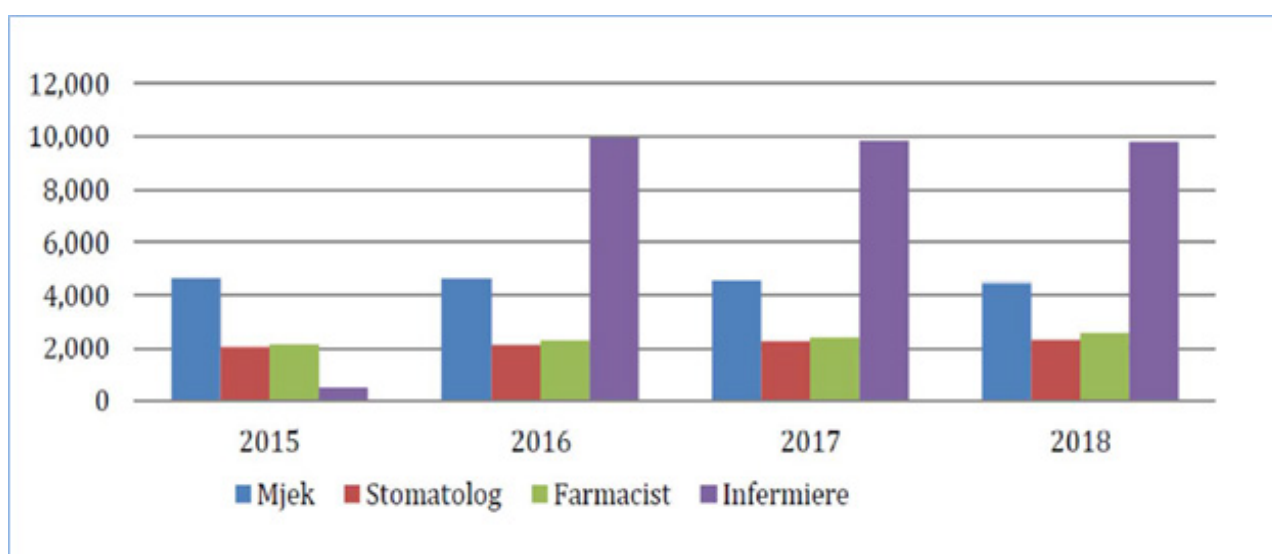


Chart 2. The number of professionals who participated in continuing professional education activities

As it can be seen from the above chart, the nurse-midwife category has an increasing trend of partici-

pation in continuing professional education activities. The participation in these activities results with the highest level in 2016, 2017 and 2018 and the lowest level in 2015.

Table 2. Number of registered professionals by profession for the period 2019-2024

Profession	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2010-2024
Doctor	7309	148	190	213	225	50	8135
Dentists	3493	143	198	158	173	63	4228
Pharmacists	3599	190	183	119	152	46	4289
Nurse	22297	2094	554	507	693	188	26333
Psychologist					1	120	121
Social Worker					1	5	6
Total	36698	2575	1125	997	1245	472	43,112

As it can be seen in the above table, registrations by year have fluctuations and an undefined trend. Since the beginning of the Certification Program for health professionals until the end of 2019, there are about 36,698 professionals in the Register of Professionals, which is the highest number over the years, while it is worth noting that 61% of these professionals registered up to end of 2019 are nurses-midwives

Table 3. Distribution of professionals' credits according to activity focus

Profession	Activity Focus	Credits	%
Nurse - midwife	Non-Specialty	64,795	13.84%
	Specialty	403,417	86.16%

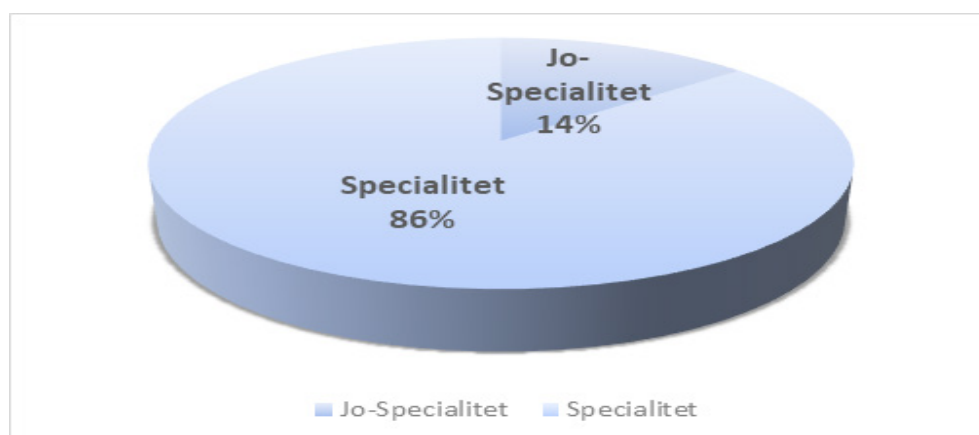


Chart 3. Distribution of nurses-midwives credits according to focus activity

Credits obtained from continuing professional education activities directly related to the professional's specialty must constitute at least 50% of the total number of credits (doctors 75 credits, dentists and pharmacists 35 credits and nurses 25 credits). As it can be seen from the table and chart above, this criterion has been fulfilled at the national level for the nurse-midwife category, where the fulfillment of the criterion of completion of credits related to the relevant specialty results in 86.16%.

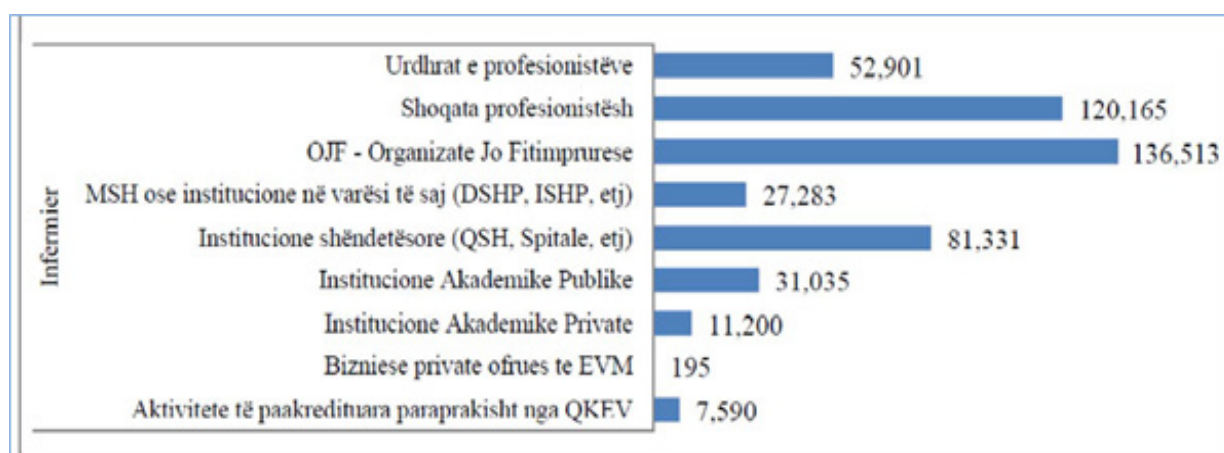


Chart 4. Credits collected by providers for nurses

As it can be seen in the above figure, most of the credits for nurses, were obtained from activities organized by NGOs and professional associations. From the analysis of the data collected in relation to the loans received by type of activity, it turns out that the highest percentage of credits are obtained from conferences and less from trainings. Despite their importance, conferences do not represent the most effective form of continuing education.

Table 4. Credits received by nurses and midwives in the period 2016-2019

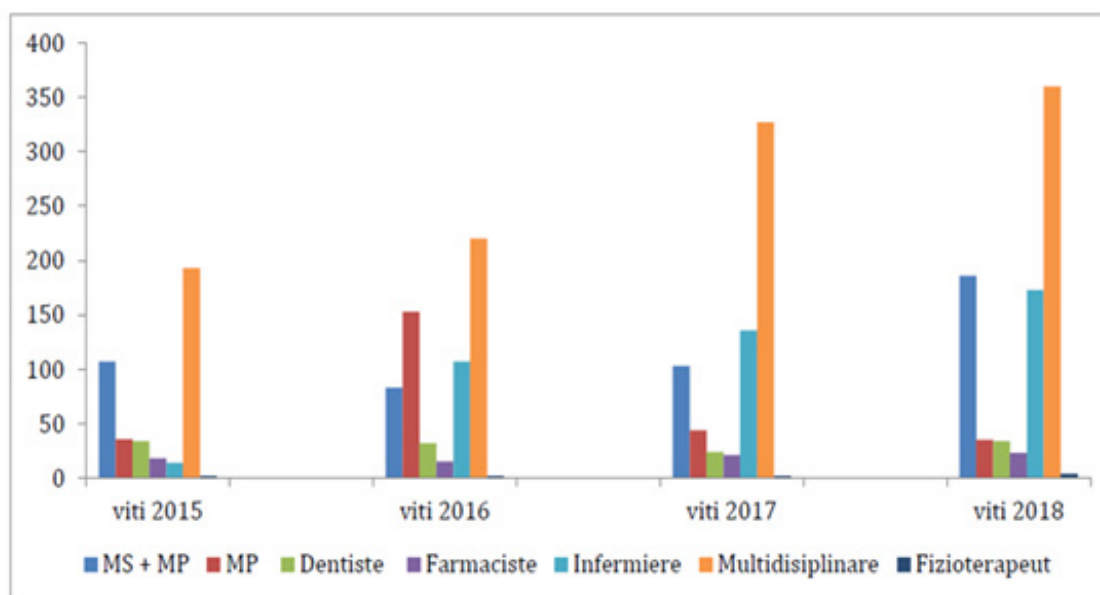
Nurse - midwife	Credits received	Në %
With credits	13,785	61%
Under recommendation (10 credits per year)	5,971	43%
On recommendation (10 credits per year)	7,814	57%
No credits	8,984	39%
Total	22,769	1

The above table shows the situation of credits received by nurses for the first 3 years of the 2016-2019 cycle, where it is shown that 61% have credits, 43% of whom have not met the recommendation of 10 credits per year, while 47% of which have completed the recommendation with 10 credits per year, while 39% of the total number are without credits.

Referring to the updated DCM No. 789, dated 22.9.2015, "On determining the criteria, standards and procedures of the certification program for health professionals" it is determined that within a 4-year cycle, nurses and midwives must collect a number of not less than 50 continuing education credits. Credits obtained from continuing education activities directly related to the professional's specialty must be at least 50% of the total number of credits reported by the professional;

The required number of credits that nurses and midwives included in the certification program must collect by the end of the cycle according to the categories of activities is up to 25 credits obtained from continuing education activities related to the profession and up to 10 credits from self-reported activities. For the period 2016-2019, MCD has not determined a minimum annual obligation and the year 2018 coincides with the third year of the cycle of nurses and midwives. This has made nurses not show interest in the first years of the cycle. Another reason that this category of professionals has not met the minimum recommended number per year may be the lack of activities organized specifically for nurses.

The chart 5. Continuing professional education activities according to the target group



As it can be seen from the above chart, there is an increase from one year to the next in multidisciplinary activities, as well as activities for general practitioners and specialists, as well as for the target group of nurses-midwives, which has undergone an upward trend, but compared to the activities multidisciplinary, the level of specific activities for nurses is lower. Despite the fact that the requirements for credits obtaining have been uniform for all years of the certification cycle, all categories of professionals have attended more accredited activities in the last two years and especially in the last year of the cycle.

It has been this pressure from health professionals, which in some way has encouraged, especially during the last year, the offering of an ever-increasing number of these activities. On the other hand, this pressure has increased the cases of declaration of many participants in many activities. This phenomenon has affected the quality of activities and should be the focus of correction efforts and finding instruments to minimize it in the future.

Conclusions.

From this paper it was found that over the years we have an increased number of health professionals registered for the target group of nurses-midwives. We are more interested in participating in activities and mainly focused on the specialties of this group. There is still work to further increase their awareness regarding the importance and necessity of participating in them, but also the provision of training activities of the highest quality and focused on updating valuable knowledge in their professional practices in the institutions of health care.

Professional education of nursing staff and updating with the latest medical research helps to develop

expertise in specialized areas, increases the employment opportunities of nurses and provides safety in their daily practice for both patients and doctors by enabling the provision of the highest quality service at all levels of health care settings. Therefore, through training programs, the new nursing role will be strengthened by increasing their professional skills and capacities.

Reference

1. Flaubert JL, Le Menestrel S, Williams DR, et al., (2021). National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine; National Academy of Medicine; Committee on the Future of Nursing 2020–2030; The Future of Nursing 2020-2030: Charting a Path to Achieve Health Equity. Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US); 2021 May 11. 4, The Role of Nurses in Improving Health Care Access and Quality. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK573910/>
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