

*Original Research Paper*

## Sensitizing Nursing Staff working in the Cancer Department of a Tertiary Care Hospital on the ICN Code of Ethics 2012: An Interventional Study

Tanveen Kaur Gill<sup>1</sup>, Rohit Arora<sup>2</sup>, Sanmeet Singh<sup>3</sup>, Sahiba Kukreja<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Post Intern, SGRDUHS, Amritsar

<sup>2</sup>Head of Department, Biochemistry Department, SGRDUHS, Amritsar, India

<sup>3</sup>Assistant Professor, Biochemistry Department, SGRDUHS, Amritsar, India

<sup>4</sup>Medical Student, SGRDUHS, Amritsar, India

**Corresponding Author:** Tanveen Kaur Gill

**E-mail:** tanveenkaurgill@gmail.com

### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Bioethics is an important part of nursing care, especially in dealing with end-stage patients like in the Cancer Hospital. Although nurses undergo suitable training in which Bioethics is part of their training, there is a lack of Ethical components in the working environment. Hence, there should be continual improvement in their knowledge and skills.

**Methodology:** An intervention study was conducted through an interactive half-day workshop on the ICN Code of Ethics 2012. The success of this workshop was later evaluated using a post-session semi-structured questionnaire. 50 nursing staff members who were willing to participate in the study were included. A pre-Test was taken before the half-day workshop. An interactive half-day workshop was conducted on the International Council of Nurses (ICN) code of ethics of nurses, 2012.

**Results:** After the workshop, the perception of the nursing staff members on the conduct of the workshop was taken by using a semi-structured and validated questionnaire and evaluated. Their knowledge was analyzed post-session. Statistically significant improvement in their knowledge was observed. The participants were well satisfied with the conduct of the workshop as observed post-session.

**Conclusion:** Teaching the ICN Code of ethics of nurses, 2012 at regular intervals would reinforce and improve their knowledge of Bioethics.

**Keywords:** Bioethics, Oncology, Nursing, nursing students, ICN Code of Ethics 2012

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### Introduction

Nurses constitute the majority proportion of medical health providers, who are the main intermediate between the patient and the doctor in providing healthcare. Nurses face a lot of problems of which Ethical problems are stated by most of them as concluded in various studies [1]. The role of nurses becomes even more important while working in sensitive settings dealing with End-stage patients. Bioethics is an important part of nursing care, especially in dealing with end-stage patients like in the Cancer Hospital. Individuals suffering from cancer often require psychological support. Nursing care for such patients often requires pain management, grief

counselling, social service, etc. [2]. These treatment measures require specially trained and experienced staff members. Ethical problems faced by oncology nurses and the need for their training on ethical components have been highlighted in various studies [3].

Although nurses undergo suitable training in which Bioethics is part of their training, there is a lack of Ethical components in the practice. Hence, there should be continual improvement in their knowledge and skills. An interventional study was conducted through an interactive half-day workshop on the ICN Code of Ethics 2012. The success of this workshop was later evaluated using a post-session semi-structured questionnaire.

## Methodology

### Pre- Session

After Ethical Clearance, 50 nursing staff members who were willing to participate in the study were included. It was an interventional study where 50 nursing staff were sensitized to the ICN Code of Ethics 2012. The pre-test was taken in the form of a semi-structured interview where one-on-one interviews were done and recorded, and their knowledge was analyzed statistically before the half-day workshop.

### Interactive Workshop

An interactive half-day workshop was conducted on the International Council of Nurses (ICN) code of ethics of nurses, 2012. Booklets on the ICN Code of Ethics were provided. The participants were divided into four teams each depicting one element of the Code of ICN. The participants were educated, and they later explained elements of the code of ICN through roleplay. Detailed discussion and an open session for answering the questions of the participants.

### Post- Session

After the workshop, post-test interviews were done and recorded, and their knowledge was analyzed statistically. The perception of the nursing staff members on the conduct of the workshop was taken by using a semi-structured and validated questionnaire and evaluated using Statistical Analysis.

### Data Analysis

The data obtained were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The two groups were compared using an independent Student's T-Test analysis. The significance level was represented using a p-value with a value less than 0.05 as significant and a value less than 0.001 as highly significant.

## Results

**Table 1- Pre and Post-Session data analysis**

### Descriptive Statistics

N		Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre session	50	1.00	8.00	4.6200	1.51037
Post session	50	4.00	9.00	7.2000	1.35526

t-value= 15.9, p-value=0.00001, Statistically, significant improvement was seen.

### Post Analysis Questions

**Question No.1** Was training on the ICN Code of Nurses, 2012 necessary?

**Question No. 2** Were the topics discussed during this training relevant and useful?

**Question No. 3** Did the instructor provided adequate resources for the session?

**Question No. 4** Are you satisfied with the duration of the session?

**Question No. 5** Are you satisfied with the various materials and resources provided during the session?

**Table 2: Open-ended Questionnaire analysis was done in which some suggestions were provided for further improvement of the session in the future. Two sets of data were obtained.**

Suggestions-	Feedback-
The use of projectors could provide an audio-visual aid in the session. Advised the use of pre-planned role plays.	Workshop was Interactive. Knowledgeable Relevant to their field Beneficial in future

### Discussion

Ethical problems are inevitable in the healthcare practice system, but they can be reduced by effective intervention [14]. Training on the ICN Code of Ethics should be one of the components of the training scheduled in the yearly training calendar in all the hospitals to provide continual Improvement in their knowledge of Bioethics. Several studies have focused on a similar topic for evaluating and improving the perception of their nursing staff [5-6]. The pre-session questionnaire was open-ended and the perception of nurses regarding patient care was analyzed. The participants were asked to provide details regarding the ethical issues necessary for taking care of the patients. Ethical issues are among the major concerns of the nursing staff [7]. Most participants highlighted the importance of providing optimism and hope to the patient. Some participants believed that care, psychological support, an emotional and loving attitude towards the patient and their family are considered necessary. Other ethical requirements for patient care as per the nurses are encouraging patients to ask questions, complete description of the disease and the treatment protocol, and financial schemes available for their treatment. Studies have highlighted the importance of ethical considerations in patient care [8].

The participants were asked to provide the method adopted by them to explain the disease, treatment, side effects, and prognosis to the patient and their family members. Most of the participants answered that they explained only the management and side effects of the treatment, while some of them stressed the importance of psychological support. Some of the other answers provided by the participants were detailed explanations regarding the disease, and the necessity to deal with phobias. Different studies have highlighted the importance of providing a detailed description of the disease to the patient [9].

The participants were asked to explain the management skills necessary for dealing with uncooperative end-stage patients. The majority of patients considered the importance of palliative care, empathy, and emotional and spiritual support to the patients.

Others considered the importance of encouragement, psychological support, and financial guidance for the patients. Nurses in different studies have highlighted the difficulty in dealing with uncooperative patients. These studies have also provided some methods of dealing with such difficult situations [10-11].

The next question was regarding the different pieces of training done by them and whether a bioethics course was included in the training. Almost all the staff members answered that they are given basic human resource development to deal with the patients and the problems faced by them. They were unaware of the word "Bioethics" and were not given any training in this field. Some of the staff members received training in hospital management. Bioethics has been considered essential for the nursing staff, as observed in different studies [12].

The final question was regarding the code of ethics followed by the staff members and available in the current practice. It was observed from the questionnaire that none of the staff members could recall the code of ethics followed them. The answer given by the staff was that maintaining confidentiality, privacy, patient autonomy, professional attitude, kindness, compassion, and good communication skills were some of the ethics followed by them [13].

## Conclusion

A statistically significant improvement in their knowledge was seen post-workshop. The participants were satisfied with the conduct of the workshop. The data were analyzed and compared using an independent student t-test and most of the participants stressed the need to conduct such workshops on the ICN Code of Ethics 2012 for their training purposes. They were satisfied with the content and resources used for training purposes in the workshop. They were satisfied with the length and modes of communication used in the training, some advised extending the duration and the modes of delivering the information used in the workshop.

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