

## 'Coping with Workplace Violence' Workshop: A Commendable Addition to the Curriculum for BA in Nursing

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**Abstract :** Violence against health professionals by patients and their families have recently become a disturbing phenomenon worldwide, exacting psychological as well as economic tolls. Health workplaces in Israel (e.g. hospitals and H.M.O clinics) provide workshops for their employees, supplying them with coping strategies. However, these workshops do not focus on nursing students, who are also subjected to this violence. Their learning environment is no longer as protective as it used to be. Furthermore, coping with violence was not part of the curriculum for Israeli nursing students. Thus, based on human aggression theories which depict the pivotal role of the professional's correct response in preventing the onset of an aggressive response or the escalation of violence, a workshop was developed for undergraduate nursing students at the Clalit Nursing Academy, Rabin Campus (Dina), Israel. The workshop aimed at reducing students' anxiety vis a vis the aggressive patient or family in addition to strengthening their ability to cope with such situations. The students practiced interpersonal skills, especially relevant to early detection of potential violence, as well as 'a correct response' reaction to the violence, thus developing the necessary steps to be implemented when encountering violence in the workplace. In order to assess the efficiency of the workshop, the participants filled out a questionnaire comprising knowledge and self-efficacy scales. Moreover, the replies of the 23 participants in this workshop were compared with those of 24 students who attended a standard course on interpersonal communication. Students' self-efficacy and knowledge were measured in both groups before and after the course. A statistically significant interaction was found between group (workshop/standard course) and time (before/after) as to the influence on students' self-efficacy ( $p=0.004$ ) and knowledge ( $p=0.007$ ). Nursing students, who participated in this 'coping with workplace violence' workshop, gained knowledge, confidence and a sense of self-efficacy with regard to workplace violence. Early detection of signs of imminent violence amongst patients or families and the prevention of its escalation, as well as the ability to manage the threatening situation when occurring, are acquired skills. Encouraging nursing students to learn and practice these skills may enhance their ability to cope with these unfortunate occurrences.

**Keywords :** early detection of violence, nursing students, patient aggression, self-efficacy, workplace violence

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