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Nursing students at the HeLM: A study of the effect of a health literacy module (HeLM) on the health literacy knowledge, attitudes and skills of pre-licensure baccalaureate nursing students

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Background: Effective communication is a foundation of high-quality, patient-centered health care. Understanding health literacy is an essential attribute that health care professionals need to possess in order to promote effective partnerships with patients and their significant others. Nurses, especially, need to be involved in addressing the epidemic problem of low health literacy in the United States because they are responsible for the majority of patient, caregiver and community health education and communication. Nurses play a key role in providing health care information to individuals, families and groups in a variety of settings and therefore should be educated about the essentials of health literacy, its prevalence in society and its relationship to health outcomes. There are currently no standards for including health literacy training in the undergraduate nursing curriculum. Results of the quantitative study will be presented.

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the Borrero Health Literacy Module (HeLM) on health literacy knowledge, attitudes and skills of pre-licensure nursing students using a pretest and posttest approach.

Method: Pre-licensure baccalaureate nursing students (n=180) were invited to participate in this quasi-experimental study. Students will complete the health literacy questionnaire: The Health Literacy Knowledge and Experience Survey (HL-KES) was used as both pretest and post test. The classroom sessions included the researcher designed components of the HeLM.

Findings: It is the hope of the researcher that the statistically significant findings will support the inclusion of a practical approach to incorporating health literacy education into the nursing curriculum.