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Nurse prescribing in Poland: Opinions expressed by doctors, nurses and patients receiving primary care

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The Act of 22 July 2014 amending the Nurses and Midwives Act, permits individuals performing these professions to prescribe medication in Poland as of 2016. Experience of numerous countries worldwide shows both a great need for introducing the above competences and benefits resulting from expanding nurses' rights. To identify and examine the differences in opinions held by health care professionals and the general public concerning the right to administer and prescribe medication which has been awarded to nurses and midwives in Poland.

The study was conducted from 1 December 2014 to 1 July 2015, in randomly selected primary health care clinics, among 2,227 individuals, including 849 subjects representing medical personnel of primary health care and 1,378 patients receiving primary care services. The study employed two versions of a questionnaire. The data was processed with the use of analytic software package STATISTICA 11.0. The relationships were examined with chi-square test for independence and Kruskal-Wallis test. The findings show that the health professionals do not believe the new rights awarded to nurses and midwives will reduce the waiting time for medical consultations ($p < 0.001$). Nurses' qualifications for the new tasks were most highly rated by patients, while the least favourable opinion was expressed by doctors ($p < 0.001$) who also most frequently emphasized the obligatory requirement for nurses to complete second-degree university course and acquire professional specialization (49.5%). Majority of the health professionals and patients agree it is necessary for nurses and midwives to be able to legally issue prescriptions, including renewed prescriptions, for selected medications and specified medical products. To introduce nurse prescribing it is necessary to develop a suitable strategy enabling implementation of the government's initiative and facilitating the process of taking up the new task by nurses. The statutory assignment of new responsibilities to nurses will not improve effectiveness of medical care, despite the public approval for nurse prescribing of medication, selected medical products and foods for special medical purposes.

Biography

Monika Binkowska-Bury is a Vice-Dean at the Faculty of Medicine, the University of Rzeszow. She successfully completed her Ph.D. at the Medical University of Lublin and in 2015 she obtained a degree of an Assistant Professor of Health Sciences. She was a Vice-Director at the Institute of Nursing and Midwifery in Rzeszow between 2004 and 2012. She has published over one hundred articles in reputed medical journals. Eleven years of experience have allowed her to broaden the interests in the field of nursing and public health as well as conduct numerous scientific researches.

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