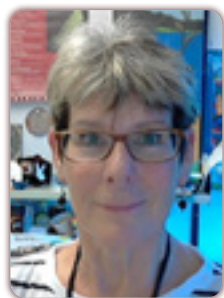


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Partnerships that enhance the art and science of nursing

Consistent concern in the health literature about health professionals' attitudes towards older adults raised the question of minimising ageist attitudes of student nurses in aged residential care (gerontology) clinical placements. The concept of ageism refers to processes of stereotyping and discrimination based on age. With an increasingly ageing population this is a cause for concern among healthcare professionals and those involved in their education. This presentation reports an exploratory New Zealand study comparing student nurses' attitudes towards older adults before and after an introductory integrated gerontology theory and clinical practice paper. Theoretical content and clinical experiences in nursing programmes should lead to attitudes that inform the practice of competent and caring practitioners. The Kogan Attitudes Towards Older People Scale was administered to 156 student nurses at the beginning and end of the first semester of study in a Bachelor of Nursing programme. The results showed a statistically significant positive shift in student's self-reported attitudes towards older adults following the theoretical and clinical experience paper. The findings contribute to international evidence supporting the view that education about ageing and ageism helps shape attitudes when integrated with positive clinical placement opportunities and positive role-modelling by registered nurses committed to gerontology.

Biography

Vivien Rodgers is a widely-experienced Registered Nurse. Initial training in Australia preceded clinical, management, academic and research experiences in surgical, maternity, primary health and gerontology settings, in Australia, Malaysia, Singapore and New Zealand. Her published research includes nurse-education and gerontology topics. Vivien has presented at national and international health conferences, and keynote speaker at national organisation gatherings. Her most recent work involves research support for improving the uptake and quality of palliative care into residential aged care practice in regional New Zealand. Vivien received her PhD from Massey University in 2016.

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