

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A descriptive correlational design was used to identify the knowledge and attitudes toward AIDS and universal precautions practices of nurses at PUMC hospital and to examine the relationships among these variables. The study was conducted from November, 1997 to December, 1997 at PUMC hospital. The instrument for data collection was the questionnaire which composed of four parts: Demographic Data Profile, Knowledge toward AIDS Questionnaire, Attitudes Toward AIDS Questionnaire and Universal Precautions Practices Questionnaire. Findings related to the objectives have been obtained. Implication and recommendations based on the findings of this study are stated in this chapter.

Findings and conclusions

Based on the findings from the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. The knowledge toward AIDS of nurses was fair. The mean scores of knowledge toward AIDS of associate degree nurses and diploma nurses were all at the fair level. The

subjects were most knowledgeable about HIV transmission. The greatest knowledge deficit lay in aspects of knowledge regarding HIV infected manifestation, testing for HIV antibody.

2. The attitudes toward AIDS of nurses were poor. The attitudes toward AIDS of associate degree nurses and attitudes toward AIDS of diploma nurses were all at poor level.

3. The universal precautions practices of nurses was not good. The practices of associate degree nurses was at fair level. The universal precautions practices of diploma nurses was at good level. The handwashing was the best UPs practices of subjects, and using protective barriers was the poorest practices of nurses in this study.

4. There was at low level of statistic positive relationship between knowledge toward AIDS and attitudes toward AIDS when the influence from universal precautions practices of nurses was controlled ($r=0.1165$; $P<0.05$). There was at low level of statistic positive relationship between attitudes toward AIDS and universal precautions practices when the influence from knowledge toward AIDS of nurses was controlled ($r=0.1318$; $P<0.05$). No statistical relationship between knowledge toward AIDS and attitudes toward AIDS was found in this study ($r = 0.0916$; $p > 0.05$).

Implication of findings

Based on the results of this study, the following implications for nursing emerge.

1. For nursing practice

The results of this study will be related back to the nurses at PUMC hospital with an explanation for their understanding the contents of the knowledge and attitudes toward AIDS and universal precautions practices. These results will help nurses increase their awareness of the necessity of learning knowledge toward AIDS and the necessity of compliance with universal precautions in hospitals.

2. For nursing education

The results of the study indicated that it is necessary to adjust the curriculum or develop effective educational programs to provide more knowledge regarding AIDS and universal precautions. By way of effective education to improve the knowledge, attitudes toward AIDS and the ability of nursing students in preventing transmission of HIV or other bloodborne pathogens in health care settings.

3. For nursing administration

The information of this study supplied the circumstance of the knowledge and attitudes toward AIDS and the compliance of universal precautions practices of nurses to administrators. It was the lack of basic understanding about AIDS and the poor attitudes toward AIDS as well as the weakness of practices of preventing bloodborne pathogens prevalence in hospital that will help the hospital administrators reconsider about the standards of disinfection

and isolation in hospital. The findings will provide guidance for inservice educational program addressing the adequate knowledge and good attitudes toward AIDS, and to improve the ability of nurses of preventing transmission of HIV or other bloodborne pathogens in health care settings.

In addition, the findings from the study will provide a reference point and new arena for further studies in the AIDS field in China.

Limitation of the study

Because of the limitation of resource and time, the study was conducted only at PUMC hospital. The subjects were restricted to the nurses in the departments except the operating room and central supply department. The data was collected just from the nurses with diploma or associate degree of nursing. And the number of AND was much lesser than the diploma nurses which may lead the biases of variables of these two groups. These limitations decreased the generalization of the whole population of nurses in China.

Recommendations

Basing on the limitation of this study, recommendations for further studies include the following.

This was a descriptive correlational design study. Experimental design study should be conducted in future to test the effectiveness of the nursing education program regarding AIDS knowledge and universal precautions as an intervention to

enhance the nurses' knowledge, attitudes and behavior that has changed after some time by using the same instrument.

For further study, the subjects should include nurses from the operating room where the nurses have much more chance to contacting patients' blood or body fluids. Qualitative study on UPs practices among health personnel should be considered.