Module Name: Working with people with acute mental distress/illness
Module Code: NU2P02
ECTS: 5
No. of Hours: 20
Term: Michaelmas
Assessment Date: Week 16
Module Leader: Michael Nash
Lecturers: Michael Nash

Aims

This module will build on the theoretical basis of mental health nursing for providing comprehensive, collaborative and individualised nursing care to people experiencing acute mental distress/illness. The module will focus on the continuum of acute mental health distress/illness, discussing the factors leading to admission to hospital, the hospital experience and reintegration into community life. The focus of the module will be on risk assessment and risk management of clients in acute mental distress. This will explore evidence based practice in assessing and managing risk in acute and community settings, the role of the mental health nurse and the role of mental health services. The module will also address ethical concerns in managing risk especially in relation to stigma, stereotyping and the impact on the concept of recovery. Finally service user input into the risk assessment and management will also be critically examined.

Learning Outcomes

Following completion of this module the student should be able to:

- Discuss risk factors that are associated with voluntary and involuntary admission to, and discharge from, mental health facilities.
- Discuss the incidence, duration and characteristics of admissions to acute care in Ireland and their impact on the continuum of mental illness/distress.
- Discuss the bio-psychosocial care and treatment commonly used with people who are experiencing acute mental illness/distress.
- Discuss evidence based risk assessment and management of clients experiencing acute mental distress.
- Examine the general principles of risk assessment and management and how these can be utilised across a wide range of mental health problems.
- Discuss service user’s experiences of the risk assessment and management and identify strategies for service user involvement in the risk process.
• Discuss the role of the nurse in managing short and long term and how families/carers can be involved in the care process.
• Explore the ethical, legal and professional issues around restraint, seclusion, observation and ECT.

**Indicative Content**

**Acute mental distress/illness:**
Describing and examining what acute mental distress/illness is. Defining risk, risk assessment, risk factor and risk management and how these influence admission/readmission rates, duration of hospital stays and individuals vulnerability to admission. Care pathways leading to admission and how risk factors are associated with admission to and discharge from hospital.

**Risk Assessment and Risk Management:**
Exploring general principles and models of risk assessment and risk management. Examining factors that can increase or decrease levels of risk. This will range from biological and other interventions as means of managing risk e.g. ECT, seclusion, observation and psychopharmacology in alleviating symptoms of acute mental distress. How organisational factors can affect client’s levels of risk, risk assessment and management of vulnerable clients who are at risk of self harm, suicide or violence and aggression.

**Applying principles in nursing practice:**
Exploring individualised risk assessment and management plans as part of the nursing process of clients with a range of mental health problems. We will also explore the role of the nurse in risk assessment and management, responses to risk events and explore how risk assessment and management can lead to preventing these. The role of co-ordinated discharge and inter-professional communication and planning will be examined as a means of supporting and managing the risk clients may face when being discharged from hospital.

**Teaching and Learning Activities**

• Lectures, directed learning and seminar discussions.
• DVD documentaries concerning mental health care will also be shown so that students can get examples of real life issues in the complexity of mental health care and recovery.
• On line formative assessment will be on WebCT in the form of quizzes.
• Module notes and various online resources will also be on WebCT.
Student Effort Hours

- 100

Assessment

Mode of Assessment Assignment
Assessment Details 2,000 words

Reading List

Essential Reading


More detailed lists will be provided by module lecturers.