

Oral Defense Announcement

University of Missouri – St. Louis Graduate School

An oral examination in defense of the dissertation for the degree
Doctor of Nursing Practice with an emphasis in Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

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Bridging the Gap: Psychopharmacologic Education and Side Effect Screening for Non-Prescribing Mental Health Professionals

Date: July 10, 2024
Time: 9:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.
Place: NAB 106

Abstract

Problem: The United States is experiencing a growing demand for pediatric mental health support. Surges in mental health diagnoses and psychotropic medication prescriptions have occurred, compounded by a shortage of psychiatric providers. Non-prescribing mental health professionals are well-positioned to recognize psychotropic medication side effects. However, psychology programs lack formal education about psychotropic medications, and psychotherapists lack formal procedures for monitoring client medications.

Methods: The quality improvement (QI) initiative was guided by the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) model. The evidence-based psychopharmacologic education for non-prescribers utilized a quasi-experimental pre- and post- test design. Data collected from clinicians included knowledge, confidence, and skill concerning psychotropic medications. The Psychotropic Medication Monitoring Checklist (PMMC) screen clients aged 3-17 years presenting to an outpatient multidisciplinary clinic within an eight-week period. Data collected from clients included age, race, gender, and number of psychotropic medications prescribed. Clinicians use the PMMC to identify medication side effects and subsequent care collaborations with caregivers and/or prescribers.

Results: The brief education was statically significantly in improving clinician knowledge, confidence, and skill about psychotropic medications in eight out of nine measures, and all survey results proved clinically significant. Seven clients were screened with the PMMC for psychotropic medication side effects, resulting in the identification of eight medication side effects and two interdisciplinary care collaborations.

Implications for Practice: Psychopharmacology education and screening for non-prescribing mental health professionals could increase clinical knowledge and care collaboration.

Defense of Dissertation Committee

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