

Nursing in surgical centers: an alert about nurses' training in Brazil

Enfermagem em centro cirúrgico: alerta para a formação do enfermeiro no Brasil

Enfermería en el centro quirúrgico: una alerta para la formación de enfermeros en Brasil

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In Brazil, since the National Education Guidelines and Basis Law (LDB) was published in 1996, all higher education curricula from public and private institutions, have been guided by the National Curriculum Guidelines (DCN). Currently, the training of Brazilian nurses follows the last DCN published in 2001¹. Its article 2 says: “the National Curriculum Guidelines for Nursing Undergraduate Teaching define the principles, foundations, conditions and procedures for training nurses, established by the Higher Education Chamber of the National Council of Education, to be applied nationwide in the organization, development and evaluation of pedagogical projects of Undergraduate Nursing Courses of Higher Education Institutions”.

When investigating the history of Brazilian nursing education, since the beginning of its establishment as a profession, there are records of courses offered in the perioperative area in nursing education². However, since 2001, when the DCN defined that the profile of the graduated/professional nurse should be that of a generalist¹, many Nursing courses decided to exclude the discipline Surgical Center (SC), which encompassed content related to the Material and Sterilization Center (MSC) and Post-anesthetic Recovery (PR) from their curricula, understanding that this theme is offered only in *Lato Sensu* Post-Graduation. However, this understanding goes against the needs of the market, which requires the generalist nurse to have minimal skills and competences to care for surgical patients in all phases of the perioperative period. Thus, some Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), even nowadays, do not include this discipline in the Curriculum Matrices of their undergraduate Nursing courses, either for: lack of professors who are experts in this subject; difficulties in obtaining fields of practice for the discipline and/or the erroneous understanding that generalist nurses do not need this knowledge, when they often work in this area.

In developed countries such as the United States of America, Canada, Australia and others, the shortage of nurses to work in SC/MSC/PR is notorious. Our country is reaching this sad reality little by little in view of the difficulty many hospitals face in filling job openings for nurses in the SC/MSC/PR that require such knowledge.

This generates more concern when faced with the updating of the DCN of undergraduate Nursing in recent years in Brazil, driven by a strong movement headed by the Brazilian Nursing Association (ABEn) together with the Brazilian Federal Council of Nursing (COFEN). This movement resulted in the publication of Resolution 573 by the National Health Council (CNS) of January 31, 2018, in which Technical Opinion 28/2018 was approved and recommends the new DCN for undergraduate Nursing courses (Bachelor's degree), being sent to the National Council of Education (CNE) for consideration³. The CNE never manifested regarding this proposal sent by the CNS and, only in March 2021, it published a draft of the DCN for Nursing courses that was rejected by COFEN⁴ and ABEn⁵, representing a setback in the training of Brazilian nurses.

In this complex setting, while not knowing what to expect or when the updated nursing DCN will be published, SOBECC lit a warning signal for the future of Brazilian nursing education and published a “*Manifesto carried out by*

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<https://doi.org/10.5327/Z1414-4425202328875>



*undergraduate nursing professors from Public (federal and state) and private Higher Education Institutions in the Northeast, Midwest, Southeast and South regions of Brazil, presented and discussed in a Session held at the 13th International Symposium on Sterilization and Infection Control on 02/09/2022*⁶. In one of its items, the manifesto warns that “the absence or reduction of contents related to the role of the Nurse in the areas of MSC, Surgical Center (SC), with emphasis on the perioperative period, and Anesthetic Recovery (AR) in the undergraduate nursing curricula reduces the interest in these areas and the offer in the labor market to professionals with the minimum knowledge necessary to act”. Thus, it recommends “establishing an undergraduate Nursing curriculum in line with national and international guidelines, with Perioperative Nursing and Health Product Processing

Nursing directly and indirectly related to measures of quality of care and promotion of patient safety in all levels of assistance (primary, secondary and tertiary)”⁶.

Furthermore, this document recommends the inclusion of minimum content addressing MSC, SC and PR, and can be found on the SOBECC website, allowing people who believe in this recommendation and in the essentialness of these themes in the curriculum for nursing education to sign it. If this is your case and you have read this Editorial, you can access the following link and subscribe now. Let us fight together for what we believe, strengthening the empowerment of nursing.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScXLPQMX-P8Dfd9fiQ2RVDVjJer8LuLsWSLTBZuNvmY5RPnNA/viewform>

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