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MAINTAINED ATTITUDINAL CHANGES IN NURSING PERSONNEL AFTER A BRIEF TRAINING ON SUICIDE PREVENTION

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Aim: To verify whether nursing personnel working at a general hospital change their attitudes after a brief training course on suicide prevention and if these newly acquired attitudes persist over a 6-month time.

Method: 317 nursing personnel attended a 6-hour training program. They answered anonymously pre- and post-training the Suicide Behavior Attitude Questionnaire (SBAQ) which comprises 21 visual analogue scale items divided in three factorial sub-scales. The scores on each SBAQ sub-scale (dependent variable) were compared along the time using ANOVA for repeated measures with rank transformation. The time of the measurement and characteristics of the nursing staff were considered as independent variables.

Results: There have been positive changes in the attitudes and these gains were significantly maintained at the 6-month follow-up evaluation. Improvement was in the Feelings and Professional Capacity factorial subscales ($p = 0.0001$ and 0.01 , respectively). There was no change on the Right to Suicide subscale.

Conclusion: It was possible to demonstrate positive changes in the attitudes of nursing personnel as assessed six months after a brief training course on suicide prevention. As attitudes influence the effectiveness of the health care personnel interventions our findings may have important implications for the development of suicide prevention programs.