
EXPERIENCE REPORT

PERFORMANCE OF THE NURSING UNDERGRADUATE IN A HUMAN MILK BANK: AN EXPERIENCE REPORT

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ABSTRACT

This is an experience report that aims to describe the process of attachment and participation of nursing undergraduates in an Extension Project entitled "Performance of Nursing Undergraduates in the Human Milk Bank of Maringá College Hospital". This project started in 2006, with the intention to promote the involvement of nursing undergraduates in the activities performed in the Human Milk Bank. The inclusion of undergraduates in the project involves the recognition and integration of the service and scientific education through courses and practical activities regarding breastfeeding. The project has developed, among the student body and the users, the application of processes that are collectively designed, in terms of common participation and responsibility, to highlight the importance and practice of breastfeeding for both the child and the mother. Therefore, the necessary relationships and understandings have been developed and consolidated with regard to adequate professional growth, enabling the development of critical, reflexive and creative thinking as a consequence of this enriching professional practice.

Keywords: Breastfeeding; Nursing Care; Community-Institution Relationships.

INTRODUCTION

In Brazil, the Human Milk Banks (HMB) are organized as part of the Brazilian National Network of HMB. This is composed of 209 registered institutions, working according to the technical standards established in the Brazilian National Program of Quality in HMB ⁽¹⁾. These banks provide a specialized service, being responsible for stimulating actions with regard to the support, protection and promotion of breastfeeding (BF). They organize the collection of lacteous products from the nurturer, the processing of this milk, quality control checks and distribution ⁽²⁾.

In this sense, HMB are seen as one of the most important strategic elements of the public

policy with regard to breastfeeding ⁽²⁾, being a determinant in mother-child health. It is widely publicised that breast milk (BM) is the best nutrition for children in their first months of life. It significantly influences reduced morbimortality due to infectious diseases, besides contributing to women's health in that it breast feeding promotes a faster uterine involution, with a consequent reduction of post-partum bleeding and anemia ^(3,4).

From the start, actions that bring awareness to the community regarding the importance of BF and that motivate this practice, are fundamental. However, it is known by health professionals that is important for women not only to know the benefits of BF, but also to be part of a favorable environment that assists her in BF, and to be able to count on the support of a

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service or of trained professionals, to assist her and stimulate her in terms of opting for this practice⁽⁵⁾. Despite this, the health professionals are not always sufficiently understanding and skillful when it comes to properly handling the many situations that emerge, and this can interfere with breastfeeding⁽⁶⁾.

In this context, the desire and the ability of the relevant professionals to provide appropriate and high quality support to both mother and child is fundamental. In this context, universities are an important means of providing timely inputs to the development of qualified professionals who are able to assist women and children during breastfeeding.

Universities integrate the activities of teaching, researching and the provision of extension projects, with the objective of improving understanding in the area, and enhancing the knowledge of future professionals. University extension projects represent an important opportunity to generate contact between undergraduates and the community, as it enables the exchange of understanding and experience. In this sense, the institution provides knowledge and assistance and receives back information on the needs, desires and aspirations of the community. The university gives assistance, learning from this group in society their views of the world in which they live⁽⁷⁻⁹⁾.

Aiming to better educate its undergraduates, the nursing undergraduate course from Maringá State University (UEM, in Portuguese) introduced an extension project entitled "Performance of the Nursing Undergraduate in the Human Milk Bank of Maringá College Hospital (MCH)" in 2006, with the objective of involving nursing undergraduates in HMB activities, based on an improvement in the theoretical and practical understanding of BF.

During the undergraduate course, the nursing students at UEM learn about lactation handling and its practice over eight curriculum hours. These hours are spread among different subjects such as "Community Health II" in the second semester and "Nursing Assistance to Woman's Health" and "Nursing Assistance to Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health" in the third semester. All three subjects involve practical and theoretical activities.

The extension project is an extracurricular activity that supports the scientific technical improvement that occurs throughout the undergraduate course.

Within this perspective, the aim of this paper is to report the process of attachment and the participation of nursing undergraduates in the UEM's extension project, called "Performance of the Nursing Undergraduate in the Human Milk Bank of Maringá College Hospital".

INSERTION MODEL ADOPTED

The attachment and participation of undergraduates in this project is encouraged from the first semester, and therefore there are no pre-requisites to joining the project. Once begun, the undergraduate must participate in a series of lectures, courses and follow-ups provided by professors and health professionals in the HMB. The participation of the undergraduate can be voluntary or as an extension scholarship holder. In this last case, the student must participate for a minimum of 12 hours per week. The schedule of the volunteers is agreed upon in conjunction with the professors responsible for this project, but cannot be less than four hours per week. As a whole, students in the first, second and third semesters are involved in the activities of the project only on Friday afternoons because they do not have other available windows in their schedule, nor free days in their timetable. As they have more time available, students in semester four can dedicate themselves to the project to a greater extent. The dynamics of attachment and learning on the part of the participating students permits them all to be involved in BF handling, as well as being engaged in scientific research. In this they are tutored by the participating professors, and may be able to present research results at local, regional and national scientific events.

On average, there are four nursing undergraduates in the project each year. Despite this, the benefits of this participation are extended to other undergraduates, because the participants work as multipliers among their peers. In other words, the participants in the project act as a source of reference to other undergraduates, who look to the participants to answer any questions or to help in nursing

orientations and caring practices regarding the handling of the process of breastfeeding.

The assisting and research activities motivate the undergraduate through constant feedback, staying as a participant in the project for many years. In the fourth semester, the undergraduates demonstrate higher initiative and dynamism. In conjunction with more time available, they are able to participate in all the activities related to the healthcare service, including those performed only during the morning shift, such as the process of pasteurization and the distribution of the donated breast milk.

The encouragement to participate from the beginning of the undergraduate course aims to sensitize and enable students as early as possible, so that by the end of their undergraduate program they have developed sufficient techniques and scientific knowledge to enable them to perform a humanized caring tailored to the needs of mothers and children. At the same time, the education of nursing students must follow the recommendations of the Brazilian Ministry of Health (MS, in Portuguese), the prerogatives and routines of the Child Friendly Hospital Initiative (IHAC, in Portuguese) and the Pre-Natal and Birth Humanization Program (PHPN, in Portuguese), all of which support actions that stimulate breastfeeding and the learning of health professionals about the issues related to BF⁽¹⁰⁾.

The HMB of MCH assists the population in the municipality of Maringá and the 29 other cities that belong to the 15th Region of the Brazilian State of Paraná. It is also assisted by other hospitals in the region, such as the ones found in the municipalities of Paranavaí and Campo Mourão. MCH aims to protect, promote and support BF, to collect and distribute certified breast milk and, as a result, to contribute to the decrease in infant death rates.

Based on this reality and the proposed objectives, from the beginning in 2006 to the present day, 16 undergraduate students, two post-graduate students, three professors from the Department of Nursing at UEM, one nurse from the Family Health team of a basic health unit (UBS, in Portuguese) of the municipality of Maringá, and the nurse responsible for the HMB, who shares her understandings and experiences with the professors who guide and supervise

undergraduates, have been involved in the project. All teachers and students work to support and stimulate BF as the major tool in promoting the health of mothers and their children.

The undergraduate students develop caring skills based on scientific theoretical knowledge, improving the understanding acquired or learned during the time in the project and through lectures and scientific study. The post-graduate students, due to their higher practical and theoretical understanding with regard to the health of women and their children, participate and guide undergraduate students, stimulating their critical-reflexive thinking regarding both caring, the research and the results.

This partnership between undergraduates and postgraduates helps in the teaching, the research and in the extension project. It also supports the demands and the needs of women who seek out the services provided by the HMB.

The nurse responsible for the HMB participates in the project, sharing her experiences and contributing specific updated theoretical knowledge, providing textbooks and scientific studies for the activities proposed by the participants in the project. Volunteers from other institutions or service, such as the UBS nurse and professionals from the area of nutrition, experience the routine of the HMB in order to enrich their professional daily practice. This allows them to be more efficient and purposeful regarding the tasks related to the handling, promotion and support of breastfeeding.

The professors who are involved in the project organize, guide and assist lactating women in conjunction with the undergraduates, promoting actions and studies that update and improve the understanding of the professionals and the students, besides developing strategies that will assist breastfeeding.

Within this context, the interconnection between the basic health units, the hospital and the university supports and strengthens the actions proposed by the Brazilian Ministry of Health, such as IHAC and PHPN. These public policies aim to improve the quality and to provide humanized assistance to women and children with regard to their health.

Nursing in the human milk bank

The process of the inclusion of undergraduates in the extension project incorporates the recognition and integration to the service, followed by guidance and follow-up of the attendance routines.

In the beginning of the process of attachment to the project, undergraduates are given the opportunity to participate in the "Updating Course in Handling, Promoting, Protecting and Supporting Breastfeeding". This course is promoted every semester by the MCH, based on Step Two of the Children Friendly Hospital Initiative, a routine that the hospital must follow to keep its accreditation. The length of this course is 20 hours, 16 of them being in the form of theoretical studies, and four in caring practices. This course is offered to MCH professionals who work in the mother-child area, and is extended to outside professionals of the community who work in UBSs of Maringá or other municipalities that make up the 15th Region, as well as those who are involved in working in collection points for donated mothers' milk, and in hospitals of the Brazilian Unified Health System network. This course helps to update, integrate, consolidate and practice the knowledge discussed and acquired in the lectures.

In order to ensure the appropriate initiation and adaptation of the undergraduates in the project, they are gradually inserted into the caring activities, starting with being simply non-participating observers. Later, they start to provide assisting observation, and subsequently assume a full participating roles under the supervision of teachers, professionals in the field and other experienced professionals who participate in the project or, in other words, without the direct supervision of professors. It is seen that taking part in the updating course is fundamental for a theoretical-practical initial preparedness in terms of the undergraduates, and for developing a motivation to assist in meeting the needs of the clientele.

The practice that unifies this process enables the integration of understanding, the application of systematized and adequate care for each situation. In addition, it provides higher security in terms of future assistance in that, once through this project, the mechanisms of the

approach have been taught and put into place. This will facilitate communication and the proximity of the subjects, besides allowing the development of advanced technical abilities.

The assistance provided by undergraduates to the users is particularly relevant, as it permits the provision of experiences and specific skills that are essential to quality assistance, which meets the needs of the target-population in the form of mothers and babies who look for assistance in the HMB, and of puerperal women and newborns in the neonatal ward of the MCH. This interaction helps to minimize gaps in the knowledge with regard to research and the practice of nursing care, because scientific knowledge must be developed in association with the intervening variables of nursing actions in specific contexts, so that the professional can develop a holistic and carefully thought out level of care that will strengthen his/her work with mothers and children⁽¹⁰⁾.

With regard to the demands identified among the users, there are cases of breast engorgement, mastitis and the need for information regarding milking relief and BF handling. In addition, there is the donation of human milk, listed as the most highly perceived need during the development of the project, based on the women and hospitalized puerperals who looked for this service. These circumstances match the reality found in the HMB of Paraná Clinical Hospital, another center of reference in terms of BF, which assists the clients of Curitiba, the state capital, as well as neighboring areas and other metropolitan cities of the State of Paraná⁽¹¹⁾.

From the beginning, in an attempt to meet those needs that can eventually compromise the prevalence and duration of exclusive breastfeeding (EBF), the main activities undertaken by the undergraduates in the project involved: 1) offering weekly lectures to hospitalized puerperals and their companions in the joint quarters, regarding the importance of breast milk to the health of their babies; 2) teaching and supervising the handling of BF issues and manual milking; 3) performing individualized assistance to lactating mothers that look for assistance from the HMB professionals, providing support, orientation and teaching related to milk handling in order to prevent and solve any difficulties associated

with BF; 4) teaching the mothers to feed the newborn with human milk served in a cup, in the event that the puerperal mother is unable to breastfeed; 5) listening to and supporting mothers and any relatives present in the HMB, or during puerperal hospitalization; 6) proceeding with the general guidelines via telephone calls to the mother or relatives regarding doubts and difficulties in BF or in milk donation; 7) performing home visits to instruct lactating mothers on breastfeeding practices, the donation of excessive milk and support with regard to collecting the BM of donors; 8) participating in all stages of BM pasteurization and; 9) executing standard procedures with regard to receiving BM from external donors, and registering in the HMB.

With regard to orientation at home, the undergraduate is followed by HMB professionals and, after feeling able to perform those activities, the student develops the role in a systematized fashion, under the supervision, or not, of a professor or another HMB professional. Such support and direct assistance are essential to prevent early weaning. As a result, the undergraduate comes to appreciate the importance of qualified care and support on the part of health professionals with regard to maintaining EBF during the first six months of life. Home visits are done with regard to all lactating mothers that have spontaneously expressed a desire to donate milk. Over the phone, a short orientation is given, and in the home of the participant, other complementary information is given regarding milk donation. In addition, the donor is formally registered. HMB has a vehicle and a driver from the MCH, who is available four times a week, full-time, to collect milk and visit the homes of the donors.

Therefore, the project ensures that the lactating mothers are properly guided and treated in an individual way, because the particular process and experience of each puerperal woman influences the disposition and maintenance of lactation⁽¹²⁾. The treatment that enables a dialogue that gets rid of doubts and allows the exchange of information, permits a higher degree of proximity of the professional to the client. This is a determinant of the most appropriate choice of conduct with regard to assisting the mother.

As a result of these actions, the undergraduates experience both practical and theoretical learning. This is because, besides the classroom learning of the students, activities related to handling and the importance of breastfeeding are undertaken. This ranges from the routine tasks of the HMB to the orientations of mothers and children in the joint quarters of the MCH and in the residence of the donors.

Besides that, through the project the undergraduates gain experience of a multi-professional working environment, as they are part of a service that brings together nursing, nutrition, medical and psychology professionals, because the process of breastfeeding is more than simply biological aspects⁽¹³⁾. This integration adds up to the holistic caring for mothers and children, as a feature of the communication and articulation of conduct on the part of the undergraduate regarding the Systematization of Assistance of Nursing (SAN).

SAN is characterized by a methodology aimed at organizing and systematizing caring, based on the principles of scientific method, and it is widely used in this context, which aligns the scientific fundamentals and the importance of organization, aiming to identify situations of health and illness and the need for nursing assistance. Moreover, it supports interventions related to the promotion, prevention of illness and recuperation⁽¹⁴⁾.

The use of SAN involves the application of the nursing process, in the form of a methodological instrument that guides professional care and nursing documentation. This process involves the participation of caregivers and users, and in this combined work, the real needs of the patients are observed, as well as the risk factors and the diagnoses leading to well-being. Therefore, it is a resolute job that involves the partnership of professionals and users.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Based on what has been said here, the development of the project has permitted undergraduates and other users to apply the processes that have been jointly created in such a way as to ensure combined participation and accountability with regard to the importance of

BF for the children and mothers, besides upholding the objectives of the service within which it operates.

Thus, the relationships and understandings involved are formed and consolidated to an adequate professional level, permitting the development of critical, reflexive and creative thinking which are consequences of this enriching professional practice. We can affirm that the scientific knowledge and the multiple realities come together to enrich the future professionals who are involved with ethical and humanistic values.

In terms of this experience, it can be seen that the integration of the work between the university and the hospital involving basic level professionals, helps to integrate services and ideas. In addition to involving different levels and types of assistance, this integration solidifies and amplifies the level of caring. The common aim is the search for the protection and promotion of mother's and children's health and the prevention of illness, all of which depends on interconnected action.

ATUAÇÃO DO ACADÊMICO DE ENFERMAGEM NO BANCO DE LEITE HUMANO: RELATO DE EXPERIÊNCIA

RESUMO

Trata-se de um relato de experiência, que objetivou descrever o processo de inserção e participação de acadêmicos de enfermagem no Projeto de Extensão intitulado "Atuação do Acadêmico de Enfermagem no Banco de Leite Humano do Hospital Universitário de Maringá". O referido projeto teve início em 2006, com o intuito de envolver os acadêmicos de enfermagem nas atividades desenvolvidas no Banco de Leite Humano. A inclusão de acadêmicos no projeto envolve o reconhecimento e a integração ao serviço, capacitação científica por meio de cursos e atividades práticas acerca do aleitamento materno. O projeto tem permitido aos discentes e aos usuários a aplicação de processos que são coletivamente construídos, sob uma perspectiva de participação e responsabilização conjunta em relação à importância e a prática do aleitamento materno para a criança e para a mãe. Assim, se formam e consolidam relações e conhecimentos necessários para uma formação profissional adequada, propiciando o desenvolvimento de pensamentos críticos, reflexivos e criativos, que são consequências dessa prática profissional enriquecedora.

Palavra-chaves: Aleitamento Materno; Cuidado de Enfermagem; Relações Comunidade-Instituição.

ACTUACIÓN DEL ACADÉMICO DE ENFERMERÍA EN EL BANCO DE LECHE HUMANA: RELATO DE EXPERIENCIA

RESUMEN

Se trata de un relato de experiencia, que tuvo como objetivo describir el proceso de inserción y participación de académicos de enfermería en el Proyecto de Extensión llamado "Actuación del Académico de Enfermería en el Banco de Leche Humano del Hospital Universitario de Maringá". El referido proyecto tuvo inicio en 2006, con el objetivo de involucrar a los académicos de enfermería en las actividades desarrolladas en el Banco de Leche Humano. La inclusión de académicos en el proyecto implica en el reconocimiento y la integración al servicio, capacitación científica por medio de cursos y actividades prácticas acerca del amamantamiento materno. El proyecto ha permitido a los discentes y a los usuarios la aplicación de procesos que son colectivamente construidos, bajo una perspectiva de participación y responsabilidad conjunta en relación a la importancia y práctica del amamantamiento materno para el niño y para la madre. Así, se forman y se consolidan relaciones y conocimientos necesarios para una formación profesional adecuada, propiciando el desarrollo de pensamientos críticos, reflexivos y creativos, que son consecuencias de esta práctica profesional enriquecedora.

Palabras clave: Amamantamiento Materno; Cuidado de Enfermería; Relaciones Comunidad-Institución.

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