

## Developing an Evidence-Based Web-Education Program Designed to Help Nurses Learn to Care for Acutely Ill Intoxicated Patients in Emergency Departments

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### Abstract

A significant part of the patients treated in an emergency department are under the influence of alcohol or drugs. It is important to identify individuals of patient groups who might benefit from an intervention to reduce drug use. The aim of the study was to develop an evidence-based web-education program aimed at enhancing nurses' knowledge and skills in the care, assessment, and management of substance-related disorders among acutely ill patients in emergency departments.

### Keywords:

Emergency Treatment, Substance-Related Disorders, Computer-Assisted Instruction

### Introduction

It has been estimated that in emergency departments about one third of the patients are under the influence of alcohol or drugs or are alcohol abusers [1]. The hazardous use of alcohol is a major global factor contributing to disease, injury, and death [2]. It is therefore important to identify individuals or patient groups who might benefit from an intervention in emergency departments to reduce alcohol use [3]. The care of acutely ill or injured patients who are also intoxicated requires wide-ranging competence among nurses working in emergency departments [4].

The aim of the study was to develop an evidence-based web-education program aimed at enhancing nurses' knowledge and skills in the care, assessment, and management of substance-related disorders among acutely ill patients in emergency departments.

### Methods

At first, nurses' competencies to care for intoxicated patients in emergency departments were clarified using a quantitative survey (N=1220, n=252) in twenty emergency departments in Finland. Second, according to findings of the survey the fields of knowledge, which should take account in the web-education program, were formulated. We conducted preliminary evaluation of the content and learning methods of the web-education program with four nurses.

### Results

The contents of the program were designed using results of the survey. The web-education program consisted of three parts: 1) patient centered encounter of intoxicated patients in

emergency care; 2) practical nursing methods in the care for intoxicated patients in emergency departments; and 3) developing quality of care for intoxicated patients in emergency departments. The preliminary evaluation showed that the program is easy to use and supports the nurses' knowledge.

### Discussion

In practice, the nurses can complete the education program independently, but they have to get a feedback from the specialists. The nurses can seek information of the topic from the program. In addition, they can discuss on the web and use a diary, for example ethical questions that they were confronted with when they have cared for intoxicated patients.

### Conclusion

The specific web-education program may be beneficial for nurses who care for the acutely ill intoxicated patients in emergency departments.

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