

Community nurses' role as counsellors in primary health care

Kotrotsiou S,¹ Lavdaniti M,² Psychogiou M,³ Paralikas Th,¹ Papathanasiou I,¹
Lahana E¹

¹Nursing Department, Technological Educational Institute of Larissa, Larissa, Greece

²Nursing Department, Alexander Technological Education Institute of
Thessaloniki, Thessaloniki, Greece ³Department of Nursing Science,
University of Kuopio, Finland

B A C K G R O U N D : Counselling is regarded as an interactive process during which help is usually provided to individuals with health problems. In the framework of nursing, nurses also play a counselling role.

A I M : The present study aims at determining the general public's attitudes and opinions about the role that nurses can play as counsellors in health related topics.

M A T E R I A L - M E T H O D : Our sample consisted of 246 participants randomly chosen; 104 (43.2%) were men and 137 (56.8%) were women. The data were collected using a questionnaire specifically developed for this study and based on literature review.

R E S U L T S : 56.1% of the participants are unaware of the term "health counselling" and 59.4% are unaware of the counselling process performed by nurses. However, unawareness does not mean that they have negative attitudes, since 202 participants (82.8%) say that they would seek counselling on health topics from nurses. Furthermore, the majority (90.7%, n=215) of the participants responded that they would trust the family nurse and 95.1% (n=231) said that they would welcome a family nurse's placement in their neighbourhood. People with chronic diseases, and mainly elderly people (n=127) would be the ones who would mostly seek counselling.

C O N C L U S I O N S : The results indicate that nurses are accepted as counsellors by lay people. The community nurse's role is important because it contributes to detection, as well as addressing of health needs of community members.

K E Y - W O R D S : Counselling, primary health care, community nursing