

Name of Student: Lau Pui Yi

October 2000

Title: Nurses' knowledge and attitudes towards the use of physical restraints in general hospital settings in Hong Kong

ABSTRACT

Use of physical restraints in hospital was often considered to be an accepted and perhaps unquestioned practice related to patient safety (Chien, 1999). However, with increased emphasis on patient rights and individualized care, nurses were often placed in dilemma with the use of physical restraints. A quantitative survey was designed to explore this issue by examining nurses' knowledge and attitudes towards restraint use. Since attitude encompassed elements of individual's knowledge, perception and behavior (Baron & Greenberg, 1993), objectives of this research were focused on nurses' overall knowledge and attitudes on the use of physical restraints, anticipated administrative support, collaboration in decision making of restraint use. Furthermore, it also attempted to explore the differences and relationship of nurses' years of clinical experience with their knowledge and attitudes about restraint use. The modified self-reported instrument "Questionnaire for Physical Restraints" adopted in this study encompassed the sections of knowledge, attitude and demographic data. Data was collected from the stratified random sampling of 257 respondents selected from nurse- managers and practice nurses of a regional hospital in Hong Kong. Data collected was analyzed by descriptive statistics, t-test was employed to examine the differences of knowledge and attitude between strata. Correlation test was used to explore the relationship between years of clinical experience, knowledge level and attitude on restraints. Research findings revealed nurses' insufficient knowledge and favorable attitudes with greater inclination in the use of restraints. Recommendations were made with focus on the contributing factors. Ascertaining administrators' role and responsibilities in changing the culture and value in restraint practice, offering of ongoing restraint education, standardizing the specific central policy and practice via interdisciplinary approach aided in improving the restraint care. Recommendation on future study with emphasis on exploring various dimensions of physical restraints was made in attaining quality restraint care.