

QUALIFICATIONS OF NURSES INVOLVED IN THE PROCESS OF ORGAN DONATION DURING BRAIN DEATH

QUALIFICAÇÃO DO(A) ENFERMEIRO(A) QUE PARTICIPA DO PROCESSO DE DOAÇÃO DE ÓRGÃOS NA MORTE ENCEFÁLICA

CUALIFICACIÓN DE LA ENFERMERA QUE PARTICIPA EN EL PROCESO DE DONACIÓN DE ÓRGANOS EN MUERTE ENCEFÁLICA

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ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION: The organ and tissue donation process is complex, and is defined as a set of actions and procedures aimed at transforming a potential organ donor into an effective donor. It is observed that the nurse is present in all stages of the organ donation process, thus being essential for the effective donation. **OBJECTIVE:** To know the qualification of nurses in the process of organ donation, reporting how scientific articles address the topic. **METHOD:** This is a bibliographic, descriptive, integrative literature review type study, which includes the analysis of scientific articles that support decision-making and the improvement of clinical practice, which enables the composition of the concept of a given subject. in addition to pointing out knowledge gaps that need to be filled with new studies.¹¹ Including articles available in full, in Portuguese, published from 2017 to 2021. **RESULTS:** The sample consisted of 11 articles, both with evidence level VI, which after reading, two categories were defined for the discussion of the topic in question. They are: Attributions of the nurse in the organ donation process and The Qualification of the Nursing professional in the face of the organ donation process. **FINAL CONSIDERATIONS:** Based on the studies of the previously cited articles, it is concluded that there is a deficit in the academic training of professional nurses related to the process of organ donation in patients diagnosed with brain death.

DESCRIPTORS: Procurement of Tissues and Organs; Brain death; Qualification; Nursing.

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RESUMO

INTRODUÇÃO: O processo de doação de órgãos e tecidos é complexo, e se define como um conjunto de ações e procedimentos que visam a transformar um potencial doador de órgãos em um doador efetivo. Observa-se que o(a) enfermeiro(a) é presente em todas as etapas do processo de doação de órgãos, sendo assim, essencial para efetivação da doação.

OBJETIVO: Conhecer a qualificação do(a) enfermeiro(a) no processo de doação de órgãos relatando como os artigos científicos abordam o tema. **MÉTODO:** Trata-se de um estudo bibliográfico, descritivo, tipo revisão integrativa de literatura, que contempla a análise de artigos científicos que dão suporte para a tomada de decisão e a melhoria da prática clínica, que possibilita a composição do conceito de um determinado assunto, além de apontar lacunas do conhecimento que precisam ser preenchidas com a realização de novos estudos. Incluindo artigos disponíveis integralmente, no idioma português, publicados de 2017 a 2021.

RESULTADOS: A amostra foi composta por 11 artigos, ambos com nível de evidência VI, que após leitura, foram definidos duas categorias para a discussão do tema em questão. Sendo elas: Atribuições do(a) enfermeiro(a) no processo de doação de órgãos e A Qualificação do profissional de Enfermagem frente ao processo de doação de órgãos. **CONSIDERAÇÕES FINAIS:** Baseado nos estudos dos artigos previamente citados conclui-se que há um déficit na formação acadêmica do profissional enfermeiro(a) relacionado ao processo de doação de órgãos em pacientes diagnosticados com morte encefálica.

DESCRITORES: Obtenção de Tecidos e Órgãos; Morte encefálica; Qualificação; Enfermagem.

RESUMEN

INTRODUCCIÓN: El proceso de donación de órganos y tejidos es complejo, y se define como un conjunto de acciones y procedimientos encaminados a transformar a un potencial donante de órganos en un donante efectivo. Se observa que el enfermero está presente en todas las etapas del proceso de donación de órganos, siendo así fundamental para la donación efectiva. **OBJETIVO:** Conocer la calificación de los enfermeros en el proceso de donación de órganos, relatando cómo los artículos científicos abordan el tema. **MÉTODO:** Se trata de un estudio de tipo revisión bibliográfica, descriptivo, integrador de la literatura, que incluye el análisis de artículos científicos que apoyen la toma de decisiones y la mejora de la práctica clínica, que posibilite la composición del concepto de un determinado tema, además de señalando vacíos de conocimiento que necesitan ser llenados con nuevos estudios.¹¹ Incluyendo artículos disponibles en su totalidad, en portugués, publicados entre 2017 y 2021.

RESULTADOS: La muestra consistió en 11 artículos, ambos con nivel de evidencia VI, que después de la lectura, dos categorías fueron definidos para la discusión del tema en cuestión. Son: Atribuciones del enfermero en el proceso de donación de órganos y La Habilitación del profesional de Enfermería frente al proceso de donación de órganos. **CONSIDERACIONES FINALES:** Con base en los estudios de los artículos citados anteriormente, se concluye que existe un déficit en la formación académica de los profesionales de enfermería relacionados con el proceso de donación de órganos en pacientes con diagnóstico de muerte encefálica.

DESCRIPTORES: Obtención de Tejidos y Órganos; Muerte cerebral; Calificación; Enfermería.

INTRODUCTION

Organ transplantation is a therapy used in patients with terminal failure of some organs and failure of some tissues.¹⁻³ To carry out such a procedure, a donor is necessary, which in most cases is a patient diagnosed with brain death, but can also be a living donor.¹

The diagnosis of BD (brain death) is carried out by two different doctors, specifically trained to carry out procedures to determine brain death. One of the precisely qualified doctors must be a specialist in one of the following areas: intensive medicine; pediatric intensive care medicine; neurology; pediatric neurology; neurosurgery or emergency medicine. If any of the previously mentioned specialists are unavailable, the procedure must be completed by another specifically trained and qualified doctor.²

According to resolution No. 2,173/2017 of the Federal Council of Medicine, published in the official gazette of the union: the clinical examination must unequivocally demonstrate the existence of the following conditions³: non-perceptual coma with absence of supraspinal motor activity; absence of trunk reflexes and apparent respiratory attacks; apnea test and additional supporting tests.²⁻³ After the diagnosis, brain death is declared. From then on, the body begins to receive the intensive

care necessary for the maintenance of its organs, becoming a potential donor.¹⁻³ It is understood that the donation process is complex⁴ and is defined as a set of actions and procedures that aim to transform a potential organ donor into an effective donor.⁴⁻¹⁶

Because of this, the CIHDOTT (Intra-Hospital Commission for the Donation of Organs and Tissues for Transplants) was created, which is made up of multidisciplinary teams that play an important role in obtaining organs, as they are located within hospital units⁶, carry out the active search for potential donors, education and social awareness about organ donation.⁶⁻⁷ Highlighting that only the doctor and nurse can assume the role of coordinator.⁶⁻⁷ Regardless of the role of coordinator or not of the CIHDOTT the role of nurses in these committees has been recognized and related to the success in making the donation. This is due to the fact that nurses are recognized as professionals who, through their technical and scientific knowledge, enable the increase and fluidity of the organ procurement and donation process.⁷

The nurse, by demonstrating mastery and skill in developing their work, assumes a leadership position in the process, becoming a facilitating element in the process of organ donation and transplants.⁴

¹⁶ When considering the complexity that permeates the entire process of organ donation and transplants, the nurse not only understands, but also becomes aware of the people involved in such a process.⁸ Thus, the nurse is concerned and interacts with everyone involved in the donation process, especially with the family. It is understood that the professional nurse understands and respects the autonomy of families, and therefore tends to make this experience positive, both for the multidisciplinary team and for family members.^{5,8}

The role of the nurse is present in all stages of the organ donation process⁴⁻¹⁶, these are: detection of the potential donor, evaluation, maintenance, verification of brain death, notification of the potential donor to the CNCDO (Central of Notification, Procurement and Distribution of organs), family interview, family consent, notification of the donor to the CNCDO, distribution of organs and tissues, Selection of recipients, transplant teams, extraction of organs, release of the body to the family.⁹

In the Brazilian state, 5,882 organ transplants took place until November 2022. Still this year, in Brazil, a total of 37,499 individuals are waiting for an organ transplant. The age group with the highest number of organ recipients and individuals awaiting organ transplantation is between 50 and 64 years old.¹⁰

The present study aims to understand the qualifications of nurses in the organ donation process and their importance in carrying out the donation, thus obtaining important information about the need for training professionals on the subject, directly influencing statistics.¹⁻¹⁹ Given the above, the question arises: how do scientific articles present the qualifications of nurses in relation to the organ donation process?

METHODOLOGY

This is a bibliographic, descriptive study, an integrative literature review type, which includes the analysis of scientific articles that support decision-making and the improvement of clinical practice, which enables the composition of the concept of a given subject, in addition to to point out gaps in knowledge that need to be filled by carrying out new studies.²⁰ The integrative review is a means of providing applicability of important research results in practice.²⁰⁻²¹

This is the methodological approach that allows the incorporation of experimental or non-experimental studies for greater insight into what is being analyzed. It also makes a combination of theoretical and empirical data and has a range of uses: identification of concepts; analysis of theories and evidence and review of methodological issues on specific topics.

A sample, together with many proposals, should produce a coherent and transparent picture of concepts considered complex or health issues related to nursing.²⁰⁻²²

This methodology consists of six phases in its construction: (1) identification of the chosen theme and elaboration of the question that will guide the research; (2) establish inclusion and exclusion criteria in the literature search; (3) define what information will be used from the selected studies; (4) evaluate and categorize the studies included in the integrative review by presenting the results; (5) analyze and interpret the results obtained in the study; and, (6) presentation of the integrative review of the information obtained.²⁰

The research was carried out through an online search, on the Virtual Health Library (VHL) portal, in the databases Latin American and Caribbean Literature in Health Sciences (LILACS), Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval System Online (MEDLINE), Nursing Database (BDENF) and Spanish Bibliographic Index for Health Sciences (IBECS).

The descriptors registered in the Health Science Descriptors (DeCS) in Portuguese “Organ Donation”, “Nursing”, “Brain Death” and “Qualification” were used and discarded through a filter applied to their respective corresponding languages in English, Spanish and other languages.

The following inclusion criteria were adopted: articles available in full, complete, in the Portuguese language, published between 2017 and 2021, totaling five complete years of the most current studies. The exclusion criteria were articles that were repeated in the data sources, incomplete, letters, theses, books, reviews, monographs and articles that did not meet the guiding research question.

It is noteworthy, regarding the level of evidence (LE), that the data were presented at seven levels as proposed by Stillwell, which comprises evidence from a systematic review; clinical trial; of controlled studies with randomization; case-control or cohort study; systematic review of qualitative and descriptive studies; of a single descriptive or qualitative study and opinion of authorities or commission reports.²⁰⁻²²

A survey of information was carried out for theoretical knowledge, without plagiarism as prescribed in Law No. 9,610, of February 19, 1998, in a respectful manner towards the authors and their ideas.²²

The methodology of Stillwell was applied and the aforementioned descriptors, found 666 productions. After applying the filters and inclusion and exclusion criteria, there were a total of 37 productions. Subsequently, the summary of the 37 productions was read and analyzed and

eliminated by type of study in accordance with the objectives of this research, with a total of 11 articles as the final sample.

The data search strategy was carried out, using the descriptors “Organ Donation“ AND “Brain Death”, “Organ Donation“ AND “Nursing”, “Organ Donation“ AND “Qualification”, “Brain

Death“ AND “ Nursing”, “Brain Death” AND “Qualification”, “Nursing” AND “Qualification” and “Organ Donation” AND “Nursing” AND “Brain Death” AND “Qualification” with the Boolean term AND, the results of which are presented in the Table 1 below.²³

Table 1– Descriptors searched with the Boolean term AND

Descriptors	Database Searched in the VHL				Total
	LILACS	MEDLINE	BDENF	IBECS	
“Organ donation” AND “Brain Death”	48	08	41	00	97
”Organ donation” AND ”Nursing”	42	01	48	00	91
”Organ Donation” AND ”Qualification”	01	00	02	00	03
”Brain Death” AND ”Nursing”	28	01	34	00	63
”Brain Death” AND ”Qualification”	03	00	03	01	06
”Nursing” AND ”Qualification”	197	02	203	00	403
”Organ Donation” AND ”Brain Death” AND ”Nursing” AND ”Qualification”	01	00	02	00	03
TOTAL	320	12	333	01	666

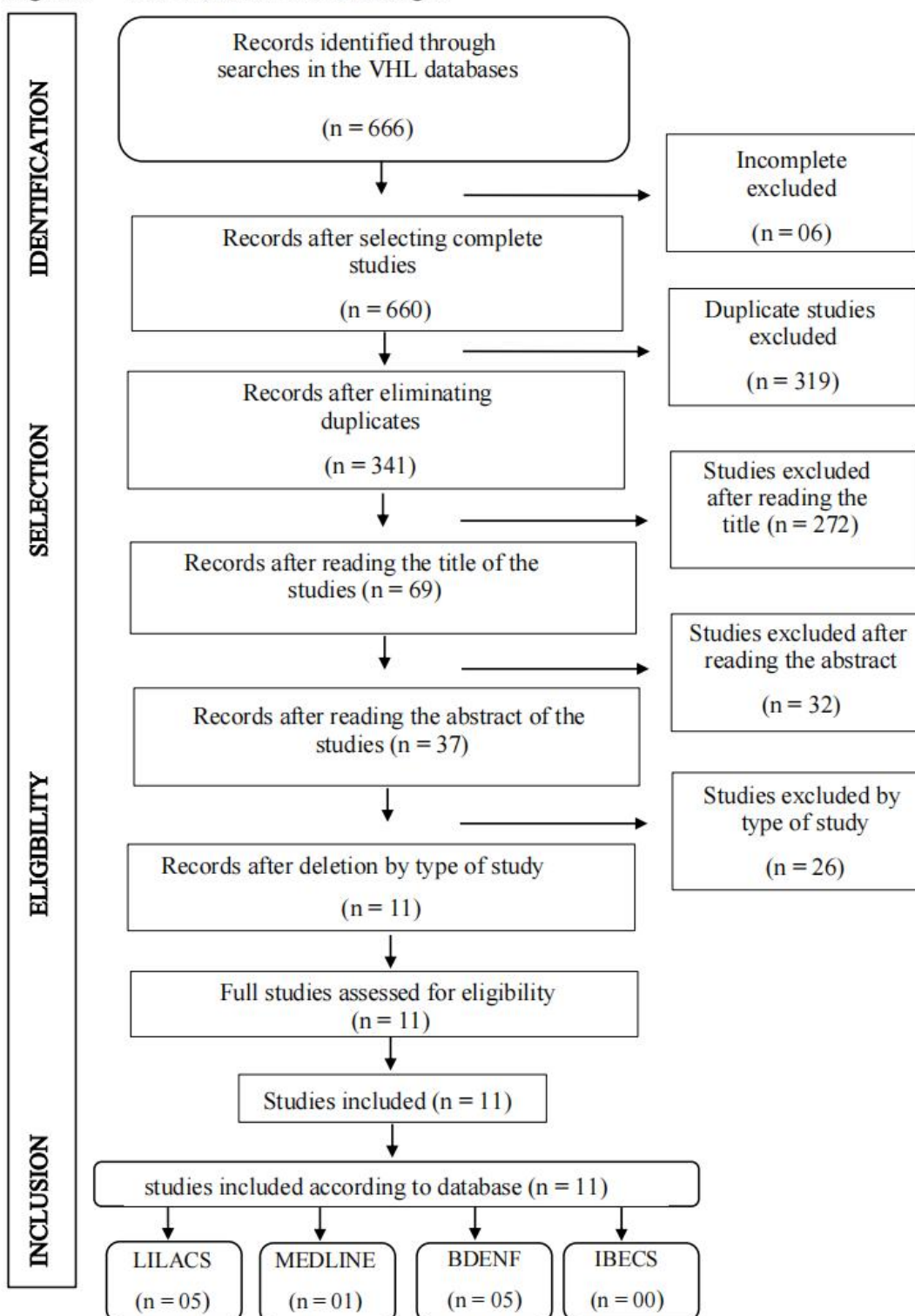
Source: Prepared by the authors, 2022.

The flowchart below (Figure 1) shows the intersections between the descriptors “Organ Donation” AND “Brain Death”, “Organ Donation” AND “Nursing”, “Organ Donation” AND “Qualification”, “Death Encephalic“ AND “Nursing”, “Brain Death” AND “Qualification”, “Nursing” AND “Qualification” and “Organ Donation“ AND “Nursing” AND “Brain

Death” AND “Qualification”, with the search resulting in 666 articles distributed in the following databases: 320 – LILACS; 12 – MEDLINE; 333 - BDENF and 01 - IBECS.²³

They were established, in this study, after the process of analysis and interpretation of eleven articles that make up this integrative review.

Figura 1 – Flowchart of the research stages



Source: Flowchart of study selection according to PRISMA - *Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses* (MOHER et al., 2009). Uberlândia (MG), Brasil, 2022.

RESULTS

Table 02 shows the data relating to the articles included in this study, coded in

A1 (Article 01) and ending in A11 (Article 11), covered in titles, authors, year of publication and objective.

Table 2– Data from articles used in the research

Code	Authors/Year	Title	Goals
A1	TOLFO <i>et al.</i> 2018	The role of nurses in an intra-hospital committee for organ and tissue donation.	Identify the nurse's participation in CIHDOTT.
A2	MARCONDES <i>et al.</i> 2019	Family approach to organ donation: nurses' perception.	Verify the nurse's perspective on issues related to organ donation with the family member.
A3	BONETTI <i>et al.</i> 2017	Organ and Tissue Donation and reasons for not carrying it out.	Introduce the characteristics of the organ and tissue donation process and identify factors that are decisive for preventing the donation process from being carried out.
A4	CARVALHO <i>et al.</i> 2019	Nurse's role in the process of donation and procurement of organs from eligible donors.	Verify the nurse's experience in the organ and tissue donation process, analyze positive and negative motivations in the effectiveness of the process and reduce rejection of organ donation.
A5	SILVA <i>et al.</i> 2018	Intra-Hospital Committee for Donation of Organs and Tissues for Transplantation: nurses' experience	Cover the conduct of nurses at CIHDOTT in a private institution.
A6	LIMA <i>et al.</i> 2020	Organ and tissue donation for transplants: knowledge, attitude and practice	Classify the learning, guidance and experience of the CIHDOTT team regarding other organ donation processes.
A7	COSTA <i>et al.</i> 2017	Weaknesses in care for potential organ donors: nurses' perception	Report the deficiencies and determining factors for the implementation of organ donation for patients with brain death.
A8	CORDEIRO <i>et al.</i> 2020	Weaknesses in the knowledge of critical care unit teams related to the organ and tissue donation process	Report the weaknesses experienced by the healthcare team in the stages of the organ donation process.
A9	MAGALHÃES <i>et al.</i> 2018	Meanings of nursing care for brain dead patients, potential donors	Explain the relevance of nursing care to patients with brain death.
A10	RODRIGUES <i>et al.</i> 2017	Care and Nursing for Individuals in Brain Death: Quality Assessment	Highlight the deficiency in the records of care provided to patients with brain death and consequently in nursing care.
A11	KOERICH <i>et al.</i> 2021	Facilitating elements in the organ donation process from the perspective of professionals	Highlight the experience of CIHDOTT professionals in ICU, Semi-intensive and Emergency Units as a facilitating element in the organ and tissue donation process.

Source: authors, 2022.

The level of evidence represents the quality of the available scientific evidence and defines the confidence in the information used, which makes it possible to

define a certain recommendation. The methodological approach of the articles and the list of levels of evidence, following the 7 levels proposed by Stillwell, with the evidence coming from a systematic review or meta-analysis; randomized controlled

study; case-control study or cohort study; systematic review of qualitative or descriptive studies; qualitative or descriptive study; opinion or consensus, both are presented in Table 03.

Table 3– Data from articles used in the research

Code	Methodology	Periodical	City State	Level of evidence
A1	Qualitative study, carried out in hospital institutions.	Rev. infirm. UERJ	Santa Maria - RS	SAW
A2	Qualitative, explanatory and exploratory study with six nurses from two institutions.	Rev. infirm. UFPE online	White Duck - PR	SAW
A3	Descriptive, cross-sectional, retrospective and documentary study, with a quantitative approach	Rev enferm UFPE online	Recife - PB	SAW
A4	Exploratory, descriptive study with a qualitative approach.	Rev. infirm. UFPI	Barras-PI	SAW
A5	Descriptive, qualitative study carried out through interviews with nurses.	Rev. infirm. UERJ	Juiz de Fora - MG	SAW
A6	Evaluative, quantitative study, applying a knowledge, attitude and practice questionnaire.	REME rev. min. sick	Vitória - ES	SAW
A7	Exploratory-descriptive study, with a qualitative approach.	REME rev. min. sick	Vitória - ES	SAW
A8	Cross-sectional study with data collection	Consider sick.	Florianópolis - SC	SAW
A9	Qualitative study based on Grounded Theory through interviews	Gaúcha Nursing Magazine	Florianópolis - SC	SAW
A10	Evaluative and documentary study with a quantitative approach carried out with analysis of medical records.	Rev. bras. science. health	Sobral - CE	SAW
A11	Descriptive, qualitative study carried out with CIHDOTT professionals.	sick electronic rev.	Florianópolis - SC	SAW

Source: authors, 2022.

DISCUSSION

After critical analysis of the articles, two (2) categories were defined for the discussion, namely: Nurses' duties in the

organ donation process and Nursing professional's qualifications regarding the organ donation process.

Category A – Roles of the nurse in the organ donation process.

According to resolution No. 611/2019, in the process of organ donation and transplantation, the nurse is responsible for planning, implementing, coordinating, monitoring and evaluating the nursing procedures provided to the donor and recipient; as well as in perioperative care.¹⁹ In A1, A3, A4 and A5, it is clear that the nurse plays an important role in the process of donating organs and tissues, and their activities cover the processes of identification, care, donation, recovery and transplantation.⁴⁻¹⁰

As analyzed in A1, A5, A6, A9 and A11, CIHDOTT must be made up of a multidisciplinary team that is responsible for welcoming the family, organizing and streamlining the organ donation process, and educating the institution's team. Furthermore, it must be made up of at least three members, one of whom is qualified for the role of coordinator – the institution's doctor or nurse – trained as an intra-hospital transplant coordinator, through a certificate issued and verified by the competent bodies. Regardless of the role of CIHDOTT coordinator, the role of nurses in these committees was recognized and related to the success of organ donation. This is due to the fact that nurses are recognized as professionals who,

with their technical knowledge and developed interpersonal skills, enable the increase and fluency of the organ procurement and donation process.⁴⁻¹⁶ Both show that the task of the CIHDOTT nurse is to deal with bureaucratic issues, coordination, notices, preparation of schedules and routines, standard work procedures, records of protocol data, activities aimed at training and continuing education of workers of health.⁴⁻¹⁶

After analyzing A2, the nurse has an important role as an educator, as he instructs the general population about donation and, mainly, about brain death, causing citizens to discuss this subject with their families and friends and become supportive of this cause.¹¹

Regarding studies from A6 to A11, it is clear that the nurse's role is to communicate to the Organ Notification, Procurement and Distribution Centers (CNCDO) the availability of a potential donor, interview the donor's legal guardian, implement the Assistance Systematization (SAE) in the organ and tissue donation process, document, record and report the donation/transplant process in the donor and recipient's medical records, and execute the contract signed at the end of the donation.¹¹⁻

¹⁶

Therefore, it is observed that 100% of the selected studies that made up this

work identified the duties and competencies of nurses, and show that their role is important and essential in the process of organ donation for the individual and family.

Category B – Qualification of the Nursing professional regarding the organ donation process.

The nurse is a professional capable of contributing to the family decision regarding the organ donation process, so he must be qualified to act effectively throughout the process and guarantee quality assistance for both the patient and the family member.

After analyzing A2, there was agreement in the reports about the need to improve their knowledge among the nurses interviewed. Everyone agrees that more information is needed to provide adequate help, however the deficit in continuing education in the form of training was highlighted. It has been demonstrated that it is very important for nurses to improve themselves through courses and training that cover all ethical and legal aspects of this process.⁴⁻¹⁶

As for A5, the nurses emphasized that they are not prepared to approach the family members of a potential donor, they say they are not sure what they will face

when doing an interview, which leads to the loss of a potential donor.⁶ The study shows that specialists' knowledge about the donation and transplantation process is insufficient, and there is a lack of information about the existence and functioning of CIHDOTT. There is a real need to develop studies that provide insightful, evidence-based information about how CIHDOTT works. It is worth highlighting that there are weaknesses in the training of nurses related to the topic. In this sense, it is important for nurses to work in this process, update information, and specialize to develop their activities.⁶⁻⁷

According to A10, the situational diagnosis of the quality of the provision of nursing services to people with BD points to the need to improve care through the commitment of the team when registering nursing to achieve greater qualification of the services offered in the health area.¹⁰

In A9, nurses point out emotional and physical overload due to insufficient human resources in the ICU, technical and emotional unpreparedness to deal with ME, logistics of the organ donation process and training of health professionals as aspects that make it difficult to care for patients with BD.⁹ ICU nurses recognize that this is not due to carelessness with the BD patient, but rather to lack of knowledge, mental and emotional unpreparedness to deal with the

situation.⁹⁻¹¹ The nurses recognize that education is one of the main strategies for organizing care. The lack of material resources, medicines and even qualified professionals prevents the team from providing adequate assistance.⁹⁻¹¹

In A7, in most cases, the family's refusal is related to a lack of understanding of the BD diagnosis and religious aspects. Another factor that determines the success or failure of transplant programs is the competence of health professionals and the education of the population.¹² In A6, professional preparation to carry out the activity is directly related to professional training. Especially with regard to organ and tissue donation, continuing education is a determining factor in improving the technical refinement of organ transplantation, the quality of family access and the rate of organ donation and recovery.⁷⁻¹³

It is concluded that nine of the eleven articles refer to the limitations of theoretical and emotional preparation, but all of them report the importance of continuing education and new studies on the topic.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Based on the studies of the previously cited articles, it is concluded that there is a deficit in the academic training of professional nurses related to the process of

organ donation in patients diagnosed with brain death. It is evident that permanent education and continuing education are determining factors for the success or failure of organ donation, ensuring better quality care, directly contributing to the reduction in the rates of non-donation.

In view of the above, it is clear that a confident professional who is aware of their skill, involvement and practice can ensure better quality care for patients and families.

In this way, the importance of acquiring knowledge related to organ transplantation and donation during training is highlighted, so that professionals acquire skills and knowledge for their work.

It is suggested that there is an urgency to investigate, study and publish studies on this topic, using results to develop projects to emphasize the importance of nursing professionals in the organ donation process. As well as the inclusion of the subject "Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation" in the curriculum of undergraduate and continuing education courses related to the topic in all places that offer health care and organ procurement.

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