

Challenges and Barriers in Triage Education for Emergency Nurses

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Abstract

Introduction/Objective: Triage effectiveness and especially the application of Canadian Triage and Acuity Scale (CTAS) is vital to patient safety in emergency departments (EDs). The aim of the scoping review was to conduct a systematic literature mapping of the knowledge about barriers to triage education among emergency nurses, focusing on the use of CTAS and resource-constrained settings, including Saudi Arabia.

Methods: Based on the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) approach to scoping reviews, a comprehensive search using PubMed, Embase, CINAHL, Google Scholar, and OpenGrey to find peer-reviewed literature (2015-2025) was conducted. Eligibility was defined using Population-Concept-Context (PCC) framework. Thematic synthesis, data extraction and study selection were done.

Results: A total of twelve studies passed the inclusion criteria. The major obstacles were divided into the following groups: professional (e.g., lack of expertise, error rates of 20-38%), environmental (e.g., noise, overcrowding), and systemic (e.g., the absence of standardized training, staffing shortages). Subgroup analysis showed that the emerging and inexperienced nurses were faced with increased challenges and in non-Canadian environments that were implementing CTAS.

Discussion: Multifaceted interventions are necessitated by the interplay of barriers. There is promise in simulation based learning and in standardized curricula. Cultural and infrastructural aspects of certain regions such as the Qassim region of Saudi Arabia require customized models such as the Qassim Comprehensive Triage Model (QCTM-CTAS).

Conclusion: Targeted, evidence-based strategies are urgently required to overcome triage education barriers, enhance CTAS proficiency, and improve patient outcomes globally.