

A Narrative Study of the Experiences of Student Nurses who have participated in the Hearing Voices that are Distressing Simulation.

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Background: Nurses are often called to care for individuals who are experiencing serious mental illness. As such, they are in the position to respond sensitively and compassionately to individuals who may be experiencing distressing auditory hallucinations i.e. hearing voices.

Aim: This study aimed to provide student nurses with an experiential learning opportunity that simulated living with the challenge of voice hearing.

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to assess the understanding and insights of nursing students who have completed the "Hearing Voices that are Distressing: Training Experience and Simulation for Students".

Design: Using a narrative research design and a convenience sample of 50-70 participants student nurse participants were asked to respond to three open ended prompts in electronic text document format (First Class) immediately following their experience of having participated in the "Hearing Voices" simulation.

Analysis: The text data generated was subjected to a thematic content analysis. The data was analyzed by a manual cut and paste approach to inductively find meanings and insights elicited from the respondents "actual words" as found in the written narratives.

Results: This study affirms the use of this experiential teaching tool to assist students in their understanding of the challenges posed by voice hearing. The simulation appeared to provide an experience that shape nursing student's attitudes and deepen their sensitivity to those with mental health challenges. In a time when consumers of mental health services continue to voice concerns regarding the insensitivity of mental health professionals, this simulation invites an opportunity to enhance professional empathy and compassion.
