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PERSPECTIVES OF NURSES' ROLE IN INTERPROFESSIONAL PHARMACEUTICAL CARE IN ITALY

Alba Malara¹, Marika Lo Monaco¹, Tiziana Avenoso¹, Andrea De Biase¹, Francesco Talarico¹, Sebastiano Capurso¹, Anna Castaldo¹, Elyne De Baetselier², Bart Van Rompaey², Tinne Dilles²

¹ ANASTE-Humanitas Foundation, Rome, Italy; ² Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, University of Antwerp, Antwerp, Belgium



Fondazione Anaste Humanitas



University of Antwerp

Background:

This analysis is a part of a pan-European qualitative interview study about PC by nurses, who is the second part of the DeMoPhaC project, an international Erasmus + collaboration to investigate nurses' role in interprofessional PC in 14 countries. We reported Italian nurses', physicians' and pharmacists' expectations about nurses' role in PC, and related strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (1).

Methods:

In Italy, as well as in other countries participants, a qualitative study was conducted through 24 semi-structured, face to face, interviews with pharmacists, physicians and nurses selected on the basis their knowledge and experience of PC. Were described nurse's specific tasks in four potential nursing responsibilities: monitoring therapeutic/ adverse effects of medicines, monitoring medicines adherence, decision making on medicines, including prescribing and providing patient education/information. Also, respondents were asked to reflect ideal communication and collaboration between healthcare professionals and on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) of nurses'

current and ideal roles. The interviews were recorded, transcribed and coded based on international codebook.

Results:

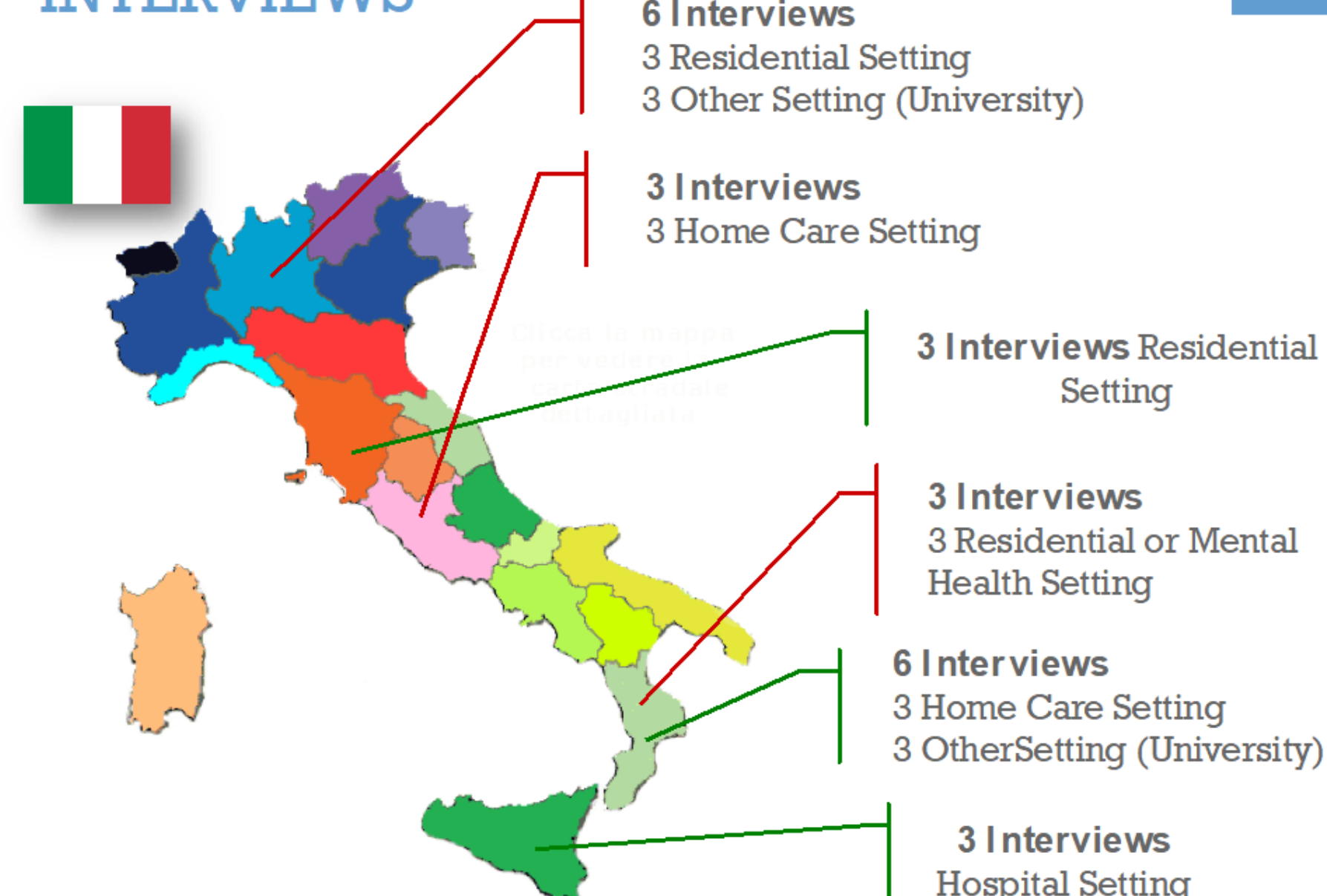
Between December 2018 and October 2019, interviews were conducted with 8 pharmacists, 8 physicians and 8 nurses in hospitals (25%), mental healthcare (12,5%), and Universities (25%). Healthcare professionals involved were equally distributed across country, 25% at North, 25% at Centre and 50% at South of Italy. The respondents had average age of $51,7 \pm 10,8$ years and of these, 13 were female. Most respondents worked in clinical practice (70,8%) and spent an estimated mean of $29,4 \pm 15.5$ hours/week on PC. According to European sample, in Italian perspectives "The proximity of nurses to patients is a strength of nurses' contribution to PC." (nurse N03) Nurses spend a lot of time with patients and these frequent contacts could facilitate each step of the PC process (symptoms screening, monitoring, adherence, making decisions, educating patients and their caregivers). Despite the prescription of drugs is not allowed in Italy, according to some of the participants, the nursing prescription would be a great support in Nursing Homes to improve care (Physician 05).

Among the weaknesses, firstly, the absence of a legal framework for nurse's roles in PC was evident in Italy as well as in other countries. Some professionals reported poor education and a lack of adequate interaction between nurses, pharmacists and physicians seemed: "...we should deepen our knowledge and learn more about drug management, have good knowledge on pharmacokinetics, understand the interaction between drugs" (nurse 01). While the monitoring of the medicines effects, adherence and care coordination by nurses were suggested as opportunities to guarantee a quality of PC, the shortage of nurses, the lack of time to care and the high burden of nursing responsibilities were reported as threats.

Discussion:

Respondents recognized the central role of nurses to aim positive impacts on care quality and the need to sharing patient observations and assessments and addressing by the interprofessional team. On the other hand, there was disagree, among the nurses too, on the possibility of the independent prescribing by nurses as it entails a new responsibility and need a specific knowledge and education.

INTERVIEWS



Conclusions: the benefits of interprofessional collaboration and communication between pharmacists, physicians and nurses require more interprofessional education, as well as rigorous research on interprofessional PC.



Erasmus+



References

1) De Baetselier E, Dilles T, Batalha LM, Dijkstra NE, Fernandes MI, Filov I, et al. (2021) Perspectives of nurses' role in interprofessional pharmaceutical care across 14 European countries: A qualitative study in pharmacists, physicians and nurses. PLoS ONE 16(5): e0251982. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0251982>

