



Overview of specialization courses in dermatological nursing in Brazil

Panorama dos cursos de especialização em enfermagem dermatológica no Brasil

Panorama de los cursos de especialización en enfermería dermatológica en Brasil

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ABSTRACT

Objective: to analyze the correlation between objectives, syllabus and methodologies used in Nursing Specialization courses Dermatological practices existing in Brazil, comparing with current legislation and literature relevant to the theme. **Method:** documentary study, carried out from May to July 2022, on websites of higher education institutions that offered these courses. **Results:** 46 private institutions were accessed, 56,6% located in the Southeast region and 43,5% in the distance learning modality. The programmatic content was made available by 41 institutions; 41,5% of the disciplines were generalist, not specific to the area; 26,8% about wounds and 17,1% dermatology. Practical activity appeared in 26,8% of the courses. **Conclusion:** the courses partially comply with the legislation and offer training that does not cover the scope of the specialty and current demands of the population.

Descriptors: Nursing; Dermatology; Specialization; Curriculum.

RESUMO

Objetivo: analisar a correlação entre os objetivos, conteúdos programáticos e as metodologias utilizadas nos cursos de especialização em enfermagem dermatológica existentes no Brasil, comparando com a legislação vigente e literatura pertinente à temática. **Método:** estudo documental, realizado no período de maio a julho de 2022 em sites de instituições de ensino superior que ofereceram estes cursos. **Resultados:** foram acessadas 46 instituições privadas, 56,6% localizadas na região Sudeste e 43,5% na modalidade de ensino à distância. O conteúdo programático foi disponibilizado por 41 instituições; 41,5% das disciplinas eram generalistas, inespecíficas da área; 26,8% sobre feridas e 17,1% dermatologia. Atividade prática apareceu em 26,8% dos cursos. **Conclusão:** os cursos atendem parcialmente à legislação e oferecem uma formação que não contempla a abrangência da especialidade e demandas atuais da população.

Descritores: Enfermagem; Dermatologia; Especialização; Currículo.

RESUMEN

Objetivo: analizar la correlación entre los objetivos, el programa y las metodologías utilizadas en los cursos de Especialización en Enfermería Dermatológica existentes en Brasil, comparando con la legislación vigente y bibliografía relacionada con el tema. **Método:** estudio documental, realizado de mayo a julio de 2022, en páginas web de instituciones de educación superior que ofrecieron estos cursos. **Resultados:** se constató un acceso a 46 instituciones privadas, 56,6% ubicadas en la región Sudeste y 43,5% en la modalidad de enseñanza a distancia. 41 instituciones pusieron a disposición el contenido programático; el 41,5% de las disciplinas era generalista, no siendo específicas del área; 26,8% sobre heridas y 17,1% dermatología. La actividad práctica apareció en el 26,8% de los cursos. **Conclusión:** los cursos cumplen parcialmente con la legislación y ofrecen una formación que no cubre el ámbito de la especialidad y las demandas actuales de la población.

Descriptores: Enfermería; Dermatología; Especialización; Currículum.

INTRODUCTION

In the multifaceted reality of the Nursing routine, nurses are considered agents of the health work process, with generalist training. One of the challenges for generalists is to face problems of clients requiring diverse knowledge that goes beyond the competencies arising from the training process in the undergraduate course. This has been a recurring problem that has led the group to face ethical and moral dilemmas in coping with the imposed and emerging demands of the world of work, including those related to people with cutaneous conditions¹.

In Brazil and according to the Brazilian Society of Dermatology (*Sociedade Brasileira de Dermatologia*, SBD), cutaneous diseases are among the main three reasons for seeking health services. In 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) recorded 127,396 new leprosy cases worldwide, 17,979 of them reported in Brazil, which ranks second among the countries with the highest number of cases². The National Cancer institute (*Instituto Nacional do Câncer*, INCA) reports that skin cancer is the most frequent in the country and that it accounts for nearly 30% of all the malignant tumors recorded³.

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A study conducted in São Paulo revealed the prevalence rates of dermatosis after evaluating 855 medical records of patients treated in the outpatient Dermatology service during 2017. Acne (11.8%), melasma (11.1%), onychomycosis (9.12%), black papular dermatosis (5.85%), psoriasis (3.7%), vitiligo (4.1%) and seborrheic keratosis (2.8%) were described among the most frequent diagnoses⁴.

Although they are common in the hospital environment, there is also scarcity of data about the frequency of cutaneous pathologies in hospitalized people. A study conducted in 2019 in Mexico recorded 9,230,968 hospitalizations in the entire country, of which 170,917 (1.85%) were the result of dermatological diseases⁵.

Dermatology is one of the oldest medical specialties and, after World War II, it has become a complex specialty due to the speed in acquiring new and constant knowledge. Integration in the hospital setting, during the 1950s, contributed a new dimension to the specialty, as a consequence of the interface with other medical specialties⁶.

Since the 1990s, the incorporation of new technologies for skin care has further expanded the need for health professionals with knowledge to meet the diverse demands of the population. In this evolutionary process, changes in knowledge about the skin and its recovery mechanisms have generated new approaches that imply multiprofessional performance, leading to the consequent search for specialization also by nurses.

In this sense, Dermatology stands out as one of the emerging areas and in increasing search for specialization, being one of the specialties recognized by the Federal Nursing Council (*Conselho Federal de Enfermagem*, COFEN) since 2011, according to Resolution No. 389⁷, ratified in the list of specialties included in COFEN Resolution No. 625/2020⁸.

Thus, it becomes necessary for these professionals to have a set of diverse knowledge, skills and competencies to promote comprehensive care, safely and resolutely in the primary, secondary and tertiary care levels. Such fact reveals that it is increasingly urgent to seek new strategies for permanent updating, as well as to review the processes for training, from undergraduation to specialized training, both by formally constituted institutions and by associations of specialists⁹.

In addition to that, the importance of a practice based on scientific evidence and focused on decision-making through clinical reasoning stands out, which has required a continuous commitment to offer new training modalities, as well as of continuous and permanent training. Therefore, it becomes crucial to invest in training and in value-added actions for a distinctive competence in the development of work processes with excellence⁹.

Such considerations led to the following research question: How are Dermatology Nursing Specialization courses (*lato sensu* graduate studies) proposed in Brazil?

In this context, the current study aimed at analyzing the correlation between the objectives, programmatic contents and methodologies used in Dermatology Nursing Specialization courses in Brazil, comparing with the current legislation and the literature relevant to the theme.

METHOD

A qualitative study of the documentary type. This type of clipping seeks to contextualize facts and situations and lead to the adoption of new panoramas, and it should extract an objective reflection from the original source, allow the identification, organization and evaluation of all the information contained in the document, composing a systematic process of collection, treatment and analysis of relevant information that reflects the study objective¹⁰.

Regarding the documentary research stages, the following stand out: formulation of the problem; preparation of the work plan; identification of the sources and obtaining the material; data analysis/interpretation; and writing of the report¹¹.

In this study, an electronic source was used to identify/obtain the data, through the websites of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) from different Brazilian states that offer the Dermatology Nursing Specialization course. Access to the information was exclusively online, from May to July 2022.

Only the Dermatology Nursing Specialization courses (*lato sensu* graduate studies) from public and private educational institutions that provided open information online (objectives, programmatic contents and teaching methodologies/strategies) were included in the study. The courses excluded were those offered outside the national territory and/or those that were not active during the data collection period.

After extracting the data from the respective websites, all the information was organized in *Google* spreadsheets containing the following: name of the HEI, name of the course, city/state, hour load, objectives, programmatic content, methodology and evaluation process.

The information regarding the teaching objectives and methodologies/strategies was migrated to the *Voyant Tools*® text mining app, which allowed extracting the keywords with the respective absolute frequencies. Subsequently, in order to enable data analysis, interpretation, synthesis and discussion, the data were treated in analysis categories according to their frequency.

The diverse information about the programmatic content of the courses was reorganized into categories, previously defining that the academic disciplines/topics would be sorted by colors. Red was used for general, nonspecific contents such as Ethics, Management and Research Methodology; orange was chosen for Dermatology-specific ones such as Skin Anatomy and Physiology and dermatological diseases; blue was employed for those related to wounds such as pressure injuries, venous and arterial ulcers; green for topics of Aesthetics; and pink for practical activities/internships. The categorization was performed blindly by two researchers specialized in Dermatology. At a second moment, the researchers checked agreement of the colors to reach consensus.

Accreditation of the courses in the Ministry of Education (MEC) and the coordinators' degrees were accessed and verified with the Ministry of Education website: e-MEC.

In relation to the ethical aspects, it is noted that only public domain information was used, which, according to the current National Health Council resolutions, waive the need for registration and evaluation by the Research Ethics Committee/CONEP system¹².

RESULTS

In the search stage, 48 private HEIs offering Dermatology Nursing Specialization courses were identified. Two were excluded because their websites were not available, leaving 46 institutions that were able to be accessed.

The highest concentration was verified in the Southeast region (n=26; 56.6%), followed by Northeast (n=10; 21.7%), South (n=3; 6.5%), Midwest (n=2; 4.3%) and North (n=1; 2.2%). The location information was not available in the websites from four institutions (8.7%).

Regarding the target audience, 37 HEIs (80.4%) specified it, 33 required a Nursing undergraduate degree (89.2%), two required an undergraduate degree in the health area (5.4%) and two asked for an undergraduate degree in an institution recognized by the MEC (5.4%), without specifying the course.

In relation to the educational teaching modality, 20 (43.5%) HEIs offered the course by means of Education at a Distance (EaD), 16 (34.8%) in-person, four (8.6%) in remote/hybrid/semi-in-person mode, and 6 (13%) did not report the modality.

Regarding the courses' hour loads, 44 (95.6%) HEIs provided such information. Minimum and maximum hour loads of 360 and 750 hours were found. Of all 20 institutions that offered courses in the EaD modality (43.5%), three presented the lowest hour load (360 hours [15.0%]), and another three, the highest (750 hours [15.0%]). Among the 16 (34.8%) that offered the course in-person, one (6.2%) reported an hour load of 360 hours, which is the lowest, and another one (6.2%) reported 540 hours, the highest observed. Of the four (8.6%) HEIs that indicated the remote/hybrid/in-person modality, two (50.0%) had an hour load of less than 380 hours and one (25.0%) greater than 492 hours.

Although the 46 courses included the word Dermatology in their title, it was verified that knowledge subareas were added in 13 (28.2%). Six (13.0%) courses were called Dermatology Nursing with emphasis on wounds, five (10.8%) were named Dermatology and Aesthetics Nursing, one (2.2%) was entitled Dermatology Nursing: Podiatry, and another one (2.2%) Dermatology Nursing: Wounds, Burns, Clinical Podiatry and Basic Aesthetics.

As for the courses' objectives, the mining process of the textual content presented by the HEIs allowed recognizing the keywords and their frequencies, according to the 46-term word cloud, as shown in Figure 1.



FIGURE 1: Word cloud referring to the objectives of the Dermatology Nursing Specialization courses in Brazil, Niterói, RJ, Brazil, 2022.

A total of 13 terms were observed with multiple frequency: 19 (41.3%) for nursing/nurse/nurses, 12 (26.0%) for dermatology/dermatological, eight (17.3%) for assistance/assist, three (6.5%) for health, three (6.5%) for aesthetics, three (6.5%) for treatment, two (4.3%) for train (v), two (4.3%) for integumentary and two (4.3%) for wounds.

Regarding the teaching methodology/strategy, 10 HEIs included this item in their web pages (21.7%): one through a video and nine in text format. Among these nine, 33 terms were identified by mining the textual content, of which five (15.1%) were cited more frequently in three different HEIs, namely: student (nine times); course (six times); nursing (four times); and classes (three times). The remaining terms appear in at least one of the HEIs, with repetition frequency equal to or less than four, namely: leverage, didactic, professor, project, access, learning, virtual, academic disciplines, in-person, biweekly and monitor (v).

The courses' programmatic content was made available by 41 (89.1%) HEIs. Some were listed in the format of academic disciplines, others as topics and others in both ways. Among them, 17 (41.5%) presented mostly generalist contents related to the Health area, nonspecific to Dermatology; 11 (26.8%) focused on the subarea of wounds; seven (17.1%) on Dermatology topics; three (7.3%) on wounds and generalist contents; two (4.9%) on Aesthetics and one (2.4%) on Dermatology, wounds and generalist contents. Practical activities were mentioned by 11 (26.8%) HEIs. In total, 661 academic disciplines/topics were identified, 230 (34.8%) classified as generalists; 181 (27.4%) related to wounds; 160 (24.2%) specific to Dermatology; 76 (11.5%) on Aesthetics and 14 (2.1%) referring to practical activities, as shown in Figures 2 and 3, as the colors cited above.

Generalist content	n	Dermatology content	n
Scientific Research Methodology	32	Skin Anatomy and Physiology	15
Course Conclusion Paper	23	Dermatology Nursing	11
Ethics/Bioethics	18	Health-related Dermatology (Leprosy/STDs)	10
Higher Education Methodology	16	Aspects Related to Healing	7
Management	13	Dermatological Evaluation/Elementary Injuries; Skin Study; Foot Injury Study; Skin Microbiology	6
Brazilian Sign Language	11	Nutritional Aspects; Dermatology focused on Gerontology; Pharmacotherapy and Phytotherapy applied to Dermatology; Skin Physiology; Autoimmune Wounds	5
Epidemiology	9	Skin Cancer/Assistance for patients with neoplastic wounds; Pediatric Dermatology; Infectious/Tropical Dermatology	4
Human Rights	8	Skin Physiological Anatomy and Semiology; Clinical and Technological Dermatology in Dressings	3
Medical-Surgical Nursing; Technological Innovations; Interdisciplinarity	7	Skin Anatomy and Embryology; General aspects of the integumentary system; Assistance for patients with hematological/dermatological injuries; Cytology and Histology; Newborn Skin Care; Peristomal Dermatitis; Surgical Dermatitis; Pemphigus; Psoriasis; Autoimmune Diseases; Epidemiology of Skin Diseases; Physical Examination; Skin Clinical Examination	2
Public Health Policies; Public Health; Systematization of Nursing Care	4	Interdisciplinary assistance in skin care; Dermatological problems in the life cycle; Psychological, ethical and legal aspects in the face of body image disorders; Biophotonics: Laser Therapy applied to Dermatology; Basic Sciences applied to Dermatology; Nursing care for patients with cutaneomucosal lesions; Dressings and care for Dermatology patients in wards/offices; Acne; Collagenoses; Eczemas; Drug-related eruption/urticaria; Pellagra; Pyodermites; Scalded skin/Steven Johnson syndrome; Zooparasitoses; Nursing applied to Clinical Dermatology; Skin aging; Scientific evidence in the prevention of health problems in the skin and annexes; Complementary examination in Dermatology; SAE for patients undergoing Dermatology treatments; Technologies for the treatment of lesions and skin care	1
Health History; Human Anatomy and Physiology; Nutritional aspects; Laboratory tests and clinical analyses; Pharmacology; Phytotherapy; Health planning; Health Service Quality; Interpersonal relationships; Semiology and Semitechnics; Health Unic System; Health technology	3		
Administration in Nursing/Entrepreneurship/Marketing; Psychosocial Aspects; Audit; Biostatistics; Professional Development; Philosophy; Seminar	2		
Epidemiological, pharmacological and gerontological aspects; Complementary scientific activities; Biosafety; Communication and personal marketing; Forensic Nursing; Humanization in health; Immunology; Emotional intelligence and high professional performance; Introduction to EaD; Professional Nursing legislation; Hormonal metabolism; Safety and entrepreneurship notions; the WHO and international policies; Technical opinion, standardization and documentation; Health-disease process; Health, education and citizenship	1		

Note: n=number of HEIs that mentioned the academic discipline/topic in the courses' programmatic content.

FIGURE 2: Generalist and Dermatology contents included in the Dermatology Nursing Specialization courses in Brazil. Niterói, RJ, Brazil, 2022.

Content on Wounds	n	Aesthetics	n
Nursing assistance for burned patients	24	Aesthetic Dermatology Nursing	15
Wounds (acute/chronic)	21	Nursing performance in the Aesthetics area; Aesthetics; Minimally-invasive procedures	4
Nursing assistance for patients with diabetic ulcers	12	Aesthetic Electrotherapy; Body Aesthetics; Pharmacology applied to Aesthetics/Cosmetology; Botulinum Toxin	3
Nursing assistance for ostomized patients; Assistance for patients with lower limb/vasculogenic ulcers	11	Evaluation and Semiology applied to Aesthetic Health; Cosmetology; Electrothermophototherapy; Phytocosmetics; Aesthetic Dermatology Fundamentals and aesthetic dysfunctions.	2
Approach and treatment of ulcers, stomas and wounds; Assistance for patients with pressure ulcers	10	Acupuncture applied to Aesthetics; Emergency care in Aesthetics clinic; Bioethics and Psychology applied to Clinical and Aesthetics Dermatology and legislation; Technical conditions and standards in Aesthetics Nursing; Aesthetics Dermatology and repair technology; Cosmiatric Aesthetics Dermatology; Facial/Body lymphatic drainage; Aesthetics and Cosmiatric Dermatology Nursing; Aesthetics and Surgery; Advanced Facial Aesthetics; Facial Aesthetics and functional dermatotherapy; Ethics, bioethics and legislation in Dermatology Nursing with emphasis on Aesthetics; Intradermotherapy and treatment of microvessels; Introduction to Aesthetics; Facial/Body massage therapy; Nutraceuticals; Pathologies related to Facial Aesthetics; Cosmetic/Chemical peeling; Integrative practices in Aesthetics; Filling of injectables and support wires; Non-surgical invasive procedures; Nutritional therapy and functional food products applied to Aesthetics; Clinical/Surgical treatment applied to Aesthetics; Trichology	1
Debridement	9	Practice	n
Dressings, adjuvant therapies and technologies for the treatment of wounds	8	Aesthetic practices	5
Assistance for patients with neoplastic wounds; Podiatry	7	Supervised Internship; Experiences	2
Evaluation of complex wounds/injuries	6	Extracurricular/Unsupervised and practical internship; Supervised clinical practice in Dermatology Nursing; Semiology practice; Dermatology Nursing practices; Practical experiences in Aesthetics Dermatology and Dermatology (Specialized service for wound treatments)	1
Complex wounds; Traumatic wounds	4		
Nutritional aspects of patients with wounds; Surgical wounds/Dehiscence and infected injuries; Laser Therapy	3		
Assistance for patients with hematological wounds; Assistance for patients subjected to grafting, plastic surgery and amputation; Biosafety; Commission of dressings; Prevention of injuries due to medical devices and Incontinence Associated Dermatitis; Negative Pressure Therapy	2		
Approach, evaluation and intervention in families of people with injuries; Antiseptics, Biofilm in wound treatments; Laboratory of aspects of people with wounds; Infection control; Pharmacology applied to wound treatments; Pathophysiology of the scar procedure; Wound treatment history; Immunology and assistance for patients with autoimmune wounds; Immunology and Microbiology in wound treatments; First aid in wounds; Psychosociology and Anthropology of being injured; Rehabilitation, prostheses and orthoses; Dressing techniques; Hyperbaric therapy	1		

Note: n=number of HEIs that mentioned the academic discipline/topic in the courses' programmatic content.

FIGURE 3: Contents on wounds, aesthetics and practice included in the Dermatology Nursing Specialization courses in Brazil. RJ, Brazil, 2022.

Regarding the student evaluation process, 18 (39.1%) HEIs provided the criterion to be adopted, 16 (89.0%) cited Course Completion Paper, five (31.2%) reported being optional, one (5.5%) indicated a seminar and one (5.5%), frequency.

Given the absence of information about the degrees of the faculty members in the HEI websites, the coordinators' degrees were obtained through the e-MEC web page. It was observed that 25 (54.3%) HEIs were accredited in the e-MEC and that, of these, 21 (84.0%) had accreditation of the Dermatology Nursing Specialization, ten (40.0%) offered the course in the EaD modality, eight (32.0%) did so in person, three (12.0%) in a remote/hybrid way, and four (16.0%) did not provide this information. Regarding the coordinators' degree, among all 21 (84.0%) accredited courses, 14 (66.7%) coordinators were MScs, three (14.3%) were PhDs, and there were three (14.3%) specialists and one (4.7%) graduate.

DISCUSSION

CNE/CES resolutions No. 1 of 4/3/2001 and 6/8/2007 establish the norms for the operation of *Lato Sensu* Graduate courses at the specialization level^{13,14}. In their 6th and 1st articles, respectively, they declare that the courses offered by HEIs duly accredited to work at this educational level are independent of authorization, recognition and respective renewal. According to the consultation carried out on the e-MEC website, almost half of the HEIs are not in accordance with what is recommended in these laws.

In this regard, Article 2 of Federal Nursing Council (COFEN) Resolution No. 389/2011⁷ stands out when it mentions that the *latu sensu* graduate degrees issued by HEIs, especially accredited by the MEC or by Societies or Associations of Specialists will be registered under the COFEN/Regional Nursing Councils (*Conselhos Regionais de Enfermagem*, CORENs) system, according to the current legislation.

Of the 20 (43.5%) HEIs that offer the course in the EaD modality, 50% did not present any accreditation in the e-MEC, which is contrary to the provisions of Articles 11 and 6 of both resolutions^{13,14}, which recommend that *Lato Sensu* remote graduate courses can only be offered by institutions accredited by the Federal Government, as provided for in Article 80 of Law No. 9,394 of 12/20/1996.

It is worth mentioning that, according to Article 3 of Resolution No. 581/2018¹⁵, the COFEN considers the degrees issued by HEIs accredited by the MEC and by the State Education Council (*Conselho Estadual de Educação*, CEE). Paragraph 3 of Article 4 of this Resolution also mentions that, before granting registration, the COREN must verify in these bodies the existence/legality of the course and issuance of the degree by the HEI training the graduate, as added in COFEN Resolution No. 610/2019¹⁶.

Regarding the different names attributed to the 46 titles of the courses found, it is observed that nearly one-fourth added knowledge subareas. It is possible that this fact is related to the subareas of the Dermatology Nursing specialty established in COFEN Resolutions No. 389/2011⁷ and No. 581/2018⁵. In 2011, the following was considered an area of coverage: Dermatology Nursing and the subareas: Stomatherapy, Wounds and Stomas. In 2018, the Stomatherapy subarea became an area of coverage, and the Dermatology Nursing subareas became Wounds, Burns and Podiatry.

It should be noted that the Dermatology area has a wide scientific scope, not included in this division into subareas, a fact that possibly influences the title and programmatic content of the courses. It is added that one of the renowned professors in the Dermatology area in Brazil mentions in his work that dermatologists should: know the basic mechanisms of the disease; understand the importance of psyche and soma relationships in order to obtain the best performance in relationships with patients; become aware of the sociological implications pertinent to certain dermatoses; appropriate the epidemiological and genetic knowledge required for the prophylaxis of certain dermatoses; and understand their important role in the preservation of community health, among others⁶.

In addition, regarding the different designations/nomenclatures related to the courses, it is noted that six (13.0%) presented a combination between the Dermatology Nursing specialization and Aesthetics. In this sense, it is important to mention that resolutions No. 529/2016¹⁷ and No. 626/2020¹⁸ designate Aesthetics as an independent Dermatology specialty. However, removing Aesthetics from the area covered by Dermatology have been the subject of debates among dermatologist nurses, given the discussions/meetings that take place at the COFEN.

With regard to the courses' target audience, only 33 (71.7%) request an undergraduate Nursing degree. Although CNE/CES Resolutions No. 1 of 2001 and 2007^{13,14} mention in paragraphs 2 and 3 the requirement for a Higher Education degree, it is important to highlight that, as it is a Nursing Specialization course in the Dermatology area, the Nursing degree is an indispensable prerequisite.

Articles 10 and 5 of the aforementioned resolutions^{13,14} state that graduate courses (specialization) have a minimum duration of 360 hours, without computing the time of individual/group study/teaching assistance and the one necessarily reserved for the preparation of a monograph/undergraduate thesis. The vast majority of the HEIs meet the minimum recommended hour load requirement, although they do not provide the distribution for each activity.

Although these resolutions^{13,14} state that preparation of a monograph/CCP is mandatory, this requirement is cited by few HEIs and some state its non-mandatory nature. Among them, there are four institutions that offer courses in the EaD modality. This fact violates the sole paragraph of CNE/CES Resolution No. 1 of 2007¹⁴, which determines that the courses offered at a distance must necessarily include in-person tests and face-to-face, individual, monograph/CCP defenses. No information was found in relation to the in-person tests.

Regarding the teaching methodology/strategies used, in this item the HEIs describe the teaching modality, the frequency of classes, the provision of didactic materials and other terms. It was not verified which techniques would be used for knowledge construction, such as problematization, active methodologies, debates, lectures, discussions and case studies.

In relation to the programmatic content, the general analysis shows that specific academic disciplines/topics of Dermatology, and of extreme relevance in the specialists' professional training, were included in a minority of the programs. In this context, it can also be highlighted that no preventive aspects involving skin health were identified, that is, maintenance of its integrity. The contents of most of the courses have a substantial focus on the treatment of wounds and/or generalist contents, probably drawn from the expertise and knowledge of the group of teachers available in the HEIs. There were also academic disciplines/topics where it was not possible to perceive the focus of the contents addressed, such as professional development, where various subject matters might be discussed, such as entrepreneurship, marketing, communication and psychomotor skills, among others.

It is observed that the worrying panorama of dermatological diseases in Brazil, revealed with the exponential growth of leprosy, skin cancer and chronic dermatological diseases such as psoriasis, with repercussions in the clinical, emotional and social spheres, was neglected in relation to other topics.

An integrative review that aimed at understanding the importance of the actions performed by nurses in leprosy control revealed the role of these professionals in the implementation of policies for control and treatment of patients, early identification, monitoring and, above all, in breaking the social stigma still present in society. The authors warn about the need to develop/implement strategies to effectively control the disease in the country¹⁹.

Nurses' actions in the prevention and early detection of skin cancer are added. One study highlights health education during individual or group contact to promote users' adherence to healthy behaviors and practices, which exert an impact on morbidity and mortality of the disease; formulation and implementation of public policies for control; and survey/monitoring of risk factors, through awareness raising campaigns and detection of suggestive lesions²⁰.

Such actions require specialist nurses' knowledge about causal factors of the disease and their trained clinical eye for identification and recognition of suspicious lesions, among others. In this context, in order to increase nurses' scope of action, it becomes urgent to encourage the organization of qualification and training programs²⁰.

The Clinical Protocol and therapeutic guidelines for psoriatic arthritis refer to the obligation to inform the patient/legal guardian of the potential risks and side effects related to the procedures or medications recommended for the treatment. This ordinance underlines the important educational function of nurses specialized in Dermatology, in addition to the competence for the preparation and administration of special drugs indicated for treatment²¹.

These and many other diseases that have been neglected in the programmatic contents of the courses analyzed exert a huge impact on Quality of Life, causing enormous distress in patients and families, either due to the stigma, chronicity and/or care required²²⁻²⁴. Lack of knowledge on the part of the health professionals who work in different health care scenarios promotes non-resolute care, which can aggravate embarrassment and foster social isolation. Minimally, the courses need to train nurses to welcome this clientele, identify dermatological problems and make decisions in order to provide dignified, safe and assertive care.

It is understood that there is certain misunderstanding in restricting the comprehensive field of preventive, clinical, surgical and pediatric dermatology to the approach of wounds. This is possibly aggravated by the way in which the COFEN decided to establish the specialty subareas^{7,15}. In its website, the Brazilian Society of Dermatology Nursing (*Sociedade Brasileira de Enfermagem em Dermatologia*, SOBENDE) makes available topics that Dermatology nurses should know and master to obtain the degree of specialists. This material may serve as a reference for course

coordinators²⁵. Another aspect analyzed was the low number of courses that proposed practical activities and the short time allocated to internships.

With regard to qualification of the faculty, Article 4 of CNE/CES Resolution No. 1 of 2007¹⁴ complements Article 9 of Resolution No. 1 of 2001¹³, when it highlights that the faculty should be comprised specialist professors or with recognized technical-professional ability, and that 50% should have an MSc or PhD degree obtained in a program recognized by the MEC. Less than half of the HEIs were accredited in e-MEC, which made it impossible to know the degree of all course coordinators; however, in any case, among those verified, coordinators without a degree were found.

There is an urgent need for discussion on the criteria established to consider professors with recognized technical-professional ability, especially with regard to the breadth of knowledge in the Dermatology area.

This study may contribute to foster a discussion about the need to review the subareas established in the Dermatology Nursing area, aiming at a broader perspective at nurses' training in this specialty. This is a crucial point, considering that there is demand from a significant group of the population that lacks specialized care from the perspective of promoting skin health and preventing diseases.

Study limitations

The limitations of this study are found in the exclusive use of public material, available on the websites, as well as in inaccessibility to the programs of the courses' academic disciplines. More comprehensive future studies would be useful to solidify the findings and broaden the panorama of Dermatology Nursing specialization courses.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study reveal that the vast majority of the Dermatology Nursing Specialization courses have weak points, especially in order to meet the legislation in force in its entirety and offer training that includes the scope of the specialty and, consequently, the demands of the population in the different life cycle phases and various health care scenarios.

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