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Join us in Paris!
By Noa Schlief and Stephanie Fitts

In the past decades a lot has changed concerning accreditation for nurses. In some countries continued education is a condition to maintain your licence as a registered nurse. In October 2020, the EAUN asked national urology nurses societies to complete a questionnaire to see what the current situation was in their country, and see if the EU-ACNE system (The European Urology – Accredited Continued Nursing Education) would fit their current environment and be useful.

Highlights from the survey results

In which countries is continuing education mandatory and in which countries is it voluntary?

CPD/CE is mandatory in four countries (Italy, Romania, Serbia and Turkey), and voluntary in three countries (Finland, Spain, Sweden). Two countries stated it was partly voluntary and partly mandatory, and two other countries stated that it depended on the exact profession and credentials.

However, the authority that decides on the requirements differs considerably. In three countries that responded it is the ministry, and for two countries it is the government. Other countries stated their professional society or the hospital or employer authorised the nursing licence requirements.

The renewal of the license/registration as a nurse is sometimes linked to the requirements of continued learning (Italy, Romania, Serbia), but in many other countries this is not (for every urology nurse) the case (Finland, Malta, Netherlands, Turkey, Spain, Sweden).

Does continuing professional development or continuing education requirements for nurses exist in your country?

12 out of the 16* societies that responded to our questionnaire confirmed that continuing professional development (CPD) or continuing education (CE) requirements exist for nurses in their country. The countries where continuing education is required are Australia, Finland, Iran, Italy, Malta, Romania, Serbia, Spain, Sweden and Turkey. Three other countries confirmed that these requirements did not exist but they were interested in accrediting their societies events. These findings highlight that in the majority of countries a nursing licence or registration renewal is linked to gaining credit points or other continued learning obligations. Therefore, ensuring the accessibility and standardisation of accreditation points becomes vital in enhancing nursing practice.

Does your national accreditation system award credit points?

The majority of countries have a national accreditation system that awards credit points: Iran, Italy, Netherlands, Romania, Serbia and Spain. In Sweden they partly award credit points and in Australia and Malta they don’t.

Would a web based portfolio in which you can register all your CPD activities be useful to your members?

Ten countries responded that a web based portfolio in which you can register all your CPD/CE activities would be useful. Four countries were unsure if a web based portfolio was necessary.

Since 2022 national societies that are a group member of EAUN can now offer their members this service at no additional cost.

Fig. 1: In which countries is continuing education mandatory and in which countries is it voluntary?

Fig. 2: Does continuing professional development or continuing education requirements for nurses exist in your country?

Fig. 3: Does your national accreditation system award credit points?

Fig. 4: Do you think it will be useful for you if the EAUN developed a platform in which you can have your society’s events accredited?

Fig. 5: Would a web based portfolio in which you can register all your CPD activities be useful to your members?

*) The results are based on responses from Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Iran, Italy, Malta, Netherlands, Romania, Serbia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, and the United Kingdom.

Summary

The results of the survey concluded that there was a significant need and interest for the development of a unified and standardised accreditation system for nurses. This gave the EAUN the motivation to take action by initiating the design of a robust accreditation system for nursing education within the EU-ACNE framework. You can find out more about the new EU-ACNE system in the article, by Dr. Jason Alcorn.
Dear EAUN members,

The growing evidence in urology nursing care is amazing!

With this column, the EAUN Special Interest Groups want to put the spotlight on recent publications in their field of interest. This month’s articles have been carefully chosen because of the scientific value from PubMed and other sources and represent different methods and approaches in research and development in urological nursing care.

We hope this initiative will have your attention and continuously provide information on “spot-on” urological nursing care. If you would like to inform us and your colleagues about new initiatives or exiting developments in one of the special interest fields you can contact us using the email addresses below.

Best regards

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Selected from PubMed

Endourology


Prostate cancer


“Spot-on” evidence-based urological nursing care
New research and developments
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• Gabriela Ilie, Ricardo Rendon, Ross Mason, Cody MacDonald, Michael J. Kucharczyk, Nikhilesh Patil, David Bowes, Greg Bailly, David Bell, David Rutledge, Michael Ha, Derek Wilke, Peter Massaro, Jeffery Zahavich, George Kephart, Robert David Harold MacDonald, Michael J. Kucharczyk, Nikhilesh Patil, David Bowes, Greg Bailly, David Bell, Joseph Lawen, Macdonald, Michael J. Kucharczyk, Nikhilesh Patil, David Bowes, Greg Bailly, David Bell, Joseph Lawen.

“Spot-on” evidence-based urological nursing care

New research and developments

Continence


Sexual Health


• Geelhoed et al. Improvement in the ability to have sex in patients with Peyronie’s disease treated with Collagenase Clotstridium histolyticum. BJUI Compass 2023;4;66–73. https://doi.org/10.1002/bco2.185


EU*ACNE nursing education accreditation system

What it is and why it matters

Dr. Jason Alcorn
EAUN Board Member
Wakefield (GB)

In this article, I would like to present the recent European Association of Urology Nurses (EAUN) efforts to ensure the EU-ACME would create a high quality and user-friendly system of accrediting nursing education (in addition to the existing system for accrediting medical specialist education).

These systems are based on international standards and I will explain why this is important to you. Continuing nursing education or continued professional development are geared towards practising nursing professionals. Both can be defined as the systematic maintenance, improvements and broadening of knowledge and skills, and the development of professional qualities necessary for the execution of professional and technical duties through the profession's working life. They are designed to provide information and knowledge that is both relevant and essential to nursing practice. To achieve this aim, programmes are required to be based on effective educational principles that promote the acquisition of knowledge while promoting efficiency, professional integrity and high ethical standards.

What is Accredited Nursing Education?
Continued nursing education is a critical part of preparing healthcare professionals to provide high-quality patient care. Accreditation is a process that ensures that nursing education programmes meet certain standards of quality and rigor. Accredited nursing education programmes provide individuals with the knowledge and skills they need to become competent healthcare professionals.

Accreditation is a process that evaluates the quality of educational programmes. EAUN has been the motor behind the current EU-ACNE system, built to credit or recognise programmes for education undertaken by an individual, thereby gaining credits for the activities. This system provides an assurance that an internationally recognised standard of quality has been met.

Why is it important for you?
Many countries do not require their nurses to attend accredited courses or have any form of accreditation. So, the question you may ask is, why is it important for me? The answer is simple: it is a means of demonstrating your commitment to quality improvement.

For individuals, the purpose of accessing the EU-ACNE accreditation system or using accredited courses or have any form of accreditation is it important for me? The answer is simple: it is a means of demonstrating your commitment to quality improvement. Further benefits can be realised through improvements in patient outcomes; identifying strengths and gaps in your career progression; improved communication and staff empowerment; and demonstrating a commitment to quality improvement.

Have your meeting accredited
Should you run, create or present educational courses, activities or events, as an individual or an organisation, you can apply for accreditation. This provides your attendees with credits, but also with the assurance that what you are providing meets a set standard.

Please check this page, or contact the EU*ACME/ACNE by email at info@EU-ACME.org to be registered as a provider.

The system
Every EAUN member has a CNE account, but any nursing professional can become an ACNE member and create a portfolio. The interface is user-friendly and easy to access with a simple format (Fig. 1). Here, credits for accredited events or activities are collected, creating a repository or portfolio that can be presented as proof of commitment to quality patient care (Fig. 2). There are many activities that credits can be gained for: lectures or presentations (including posters or videos); publications; educational material produced; participation in committees; reading an article in a recognised urological journal and answering the multiple choice questions; or any other learning experience that have the required documentation. To collect the credits the meeting/event/activity must be accredited by a (inter)national accreditation authority, such as one in your own country or the EU-ACNE.

In concluding this short article, we can all agree that continued nursing education in whatever format is an essential part of our practice. How we evidence this, is where the EAUN has stepped in to ensure such a system would become a reality for its members. In providing a system which is user-friendly and easy to access, educational credits can be collected in one place. These can then be used to demonstrate commitment to improving quality urology nursing care and help you stand out from the crowd.

The EU-ACNE website can be found here: www.eu-acme.org
Addressing female sexual function is an essential part of this SIG’s work as well. Within urology, female sexual function is also an issue, i.e. bladder cancer patients, receiving a urostomy. Another example is urinary tract issues and incontinence. That’s why we are delighted to have Rebecca Martin (GB) in our group too, because she is very specialised in this field.

“If you are interested in the topic of sexual health and would like to join us, please don’t hesitate to contact us.”

In addition to Rebecca, Helen Battard-Bason (MT) and Mariet Lenaers (BE) have agreed to be part of the SIG as well. Together, the four of us will carry out activities expected from such a group, such as organising webinars and sessions during the annual EAUN meeting.

We aspire to be an active SIG and collaborate with the other SIGs on overlapping subjects. If you are interested in the topic of sexual health and would like to join us, please don’t hesitate to contact us.

Since the last EAUN meeting, held at EAUN23 in Milan earlier this year, a new Special Interest Group (SIG) called SIG Sexual Health has been launched. I took the initiative to form this new SIG and approached several urology nurses during the EAUN23 meeting, inviting them to join me.

My idea of forming a SIG focused on sexual functioning in men was envisaged several years ago. At that time, as an EAUN board member and chair of the Scientific Congress Office, I had enough opportunities to bring attention to the subject of sexual functioning in men. After discussing it with fellow board members, I wanted to kick-start the SIG immediately after I finished my term on the board, so I did.

My interest lies specifically in andrology and men’s health. I work as a clinical nurse specialist (CNS)/advanced nurse practitioner (ANP) fully in andrology in a nurse lead outpatient clinic in a large teaching hospital in the Netherlands. I see patients, diagnose them and treat them with all different kinds of andrological conditions, ranging from erectile dysfunction, hypogonadism and Peyronie's disease. Currently, I am conducting my PhD study on Peyronie’s disease.
A crucial prevalence study on female UI conducted in Milan

Research Team: 
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S. Gnechi, Nurse, MScN Student, Milan, IT; 
A. Poliani, Nurse, MScN Student, Milan, IT; 
D.F. Manara, Nurse, Midwife, Prof. in Nursing, Milan, IT 

The chance to participate and win the nursing research competition in order to promote our study has aroused our group's interest and enthusiasm.

As Italian nurses, being part of this competition judged by international expert colleagues is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for many reasons. The competition creates an open forum where we can present our research idea, and allows us to share and build better research because the competition is based on the comparison and suggestions of an international audience. Therefore, the competition allows us to build more effective research for our patients.

The European Association of Urology Nurses (EAUN), among its many important roles, is also active in supporting and improving clinical practice through research. Indeed, the EAUN supports the competition every year; thus, enables the advancement of knowledge in urology nursing through the promotion of research studies.

A great deal of work has been done in recent years to promote nursing research in urology, and the research project that we as a group have presented fulfils this purpose.

The reasons behind the construction of this research project are manifold. The first reason is that this project wants to give voice and relevance to an issue that affects many women globally urinary incontinence (UI). Bladder problems and urinary diseases, also known as lower urinary tract symptoms (LUTS), are common in women worldwide (Todhunter-Brown et al., 2022). One of these problems is UI which is defined as "the complaint of any involuntary leakage of urine" (Abrams et al., 2003; Hylen et al., 2010).

UI has been identified as a World Health Organization health priority because it negatively influences the physical, psychological and social life of the affected people (Batmani et al., 2021). Bladder problems and urinary diseases, also known as lower urinary tract symptoms (LUTS), are common in women worldwide (Todhunter-Brown et al., 2022). One of these problems is UI which is defined as "the complaint of any involuntary leakage of urine" (Abrams et al., 2003; Hylen et al., 2010).

UI has been identified as a World Health Organization health priority because it negatively influences the physical, psychological and social life of the affected people because it is an underestimated problem (Tran & Puckett, 2022). For these reasons, epidemiological information is needed to plan and evaluate treatment practices to counteract UI.

The objectives of the research project are to calculate the prevalence and investigate the costs and predisposing factors of UI in a university and research hospital in Milan, Italy. This study will be the first of a sequence. Subsequent studies will explore non-pharmacological strategies to support women with UI, and the experiences of women with UI. The primary outcome is to calculate the prevalence of middle-aged women with urinary incontinence. There are two secondary outcomes: 1. To describe the UI and related predictors, quality of life, social impact and costs. 2. To describe the association between UI and related predictors, quality of life, social impact and costs.

“UI has been identified as a World Health Organization health priority because it negatively influences the physical, psychological and social life of the affected people...”

According to statistics produced by the Italian Institute for Statistics (ISTAT), the population is aging, and the average age of the population ranges between 40 and 65 years old (ISTAT, 2021). Statistics suggest focusing on this specific range of age, in which high quality of life and healthy lifestyle is expected, also because they are socially active women. In addition, the range 40 to 65 represents the starting point of significant occurrence of UI in the female population (Wieland et al., 2019; Fincopp, 2022). Currently, the Italian epidemiology for UI is approximately 3 million women (Finchop, 2022), but the last published Italian prevalence studies date back to the first decade of the new millennium (Bortolotti et al., 2000; Siracusano et al., 2003). For this reason, a prevalence study focused on UI in Italy could provide significant information.

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The research team declared that they have no competing interest or relationship, financial or otherwise, or personal, religious, or political beliefs that might be perceived as influencing an investigator’s objectivity.

References


The complete reference list of this article is available from the EUT Editorial Office. Please send an e-mail to: EUT@uroweb.org with reference to the article “A crucial prevalence study on female UI conducted in Milan” by Dr. G. Villa, June/July issue 2023.