

ASSESSMENT OF PROFESSIONAL NURSES KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS IN FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT IN SELECTED HEALTH CARE CENTRES .



Introduction and Background

- **The role of professional nurses has changed from managing a single inpatient unit to that of being responsible for multiple units, more employees, larger operating budgets, and clinical services.**
- **Thus sound financial knowledge and participation in financial planning is vital.**
- **Basis for this argument is for connection of “caring” and “quality” patient care delivery with efficient and effective financial management.**
- **However, professional nurses lack knowledge and skills in financial management in their facilities.**



Research problem (What is the gap)

- **Nurses are taught financial management as part of the four year diploma course.**
- **The curriculum equips registered nurses with knowledge and skills in budgeting, procurement, such as inventory, material resources, ordering of stock.**
- **The researcher has observed that in the selected CHC`s the only nursing personnel who are involved in drawing up budgets for their centres are the facility managers.**
- **The facility managers are expected to have acquired enough knowledge.**
- **The lack of involvement of the other professional nurses in finance management for the centres could lead to under utilization of both human and material resources.**



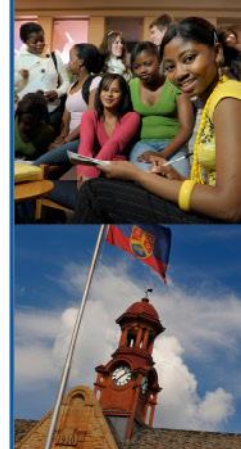
Research problem (What is the gap)

- This could also result in a lack of knowledge about quality assurance control for the centres, because quality cannot be ensured unless the budget allows for the necessary material resources to render quality services.
- There is a need for financial leaders in health care institutions to communicate financial guidelines to professional nurses who are part of finance management on a regular basis.
- Equipping nurses with financial management skills and knowledge might assist institutions to manage resources and budgets adequately to achieve the goals of the CHC`s as specified in the policy framework. However there is little evidence to show that the majority of professional nurses involved in the budget for their centres are knowledgeable in financial management.



Research aims

- To assess the skills of registered nurses in terms of standard operational plans and drug supply management in the centre, consumables, equipment and furnisher.
- To assess the knowledge that professional nurses possess regarding the PFMA Act No. 1 OF 1999)
- To explore the extent of involvement of professional nurses, in financial management of the health care centre.
- To make recommendations for staff development that will equip professional nurses with knowledge in financial management.



Research design and method

Research design

- A quantitative design was applied, with an explorative and descriptive approach. The chosen approach enabled the researcher to describe the knowledge of professional nurses regarding financial management and participation in financial planning.

Research approach and method

- A non-experimental descriptive survey making use of a questionnaire was carried out to collect data from 90 professional nurses in the selected CHC`s.

Population and sampling

- According to LoBiondo-Wood and Harber (2010:226), convenience sampling is a non-probability method used to select participants who are readily assessable to the researcher. Convenience sampling for this study was deemed to be most suitable because the participants had experience and were familiar with the implementation of the PFMA.



Ethical considerations

- In accordance with ethical guidelines (Bless, Higson-Smith & Kagee 2006:142–145), permission to conduct the research was obtained from the Faculty of Health Sciences Research Ethics Committee of the University of Pretoria, and all other relevant stakeholders.
- The research procedure was explained and respondents were given a chance to read through the covering letter in order for verbal and written consent from them to be obtained.
- Respondents were informed about their right to withdraw from the study at any given time. They all participated voluntarily without being offered any incentives for participating in the study.



Ethical considerations

- Respondents were reassured of anonymity and confidentiality.
- No personal identification was required and respondents were requested to refrain from writing their names or signatures on the questionnaires.
- The anonymity of the CHC`s was also protected by making it impossible to link specific information to the specific CHC, because the same box was used to collect all the completed questionnaires from both clinics.



Research results

- The respondents' ages range between 31 – 40 years. 59% had post basic studies, the highest qualification was a bachelors degree. 46% were trained in Primary Health Care.
- The majority (54%) had knowledge about PFMA and they were also knowledgeable about the financial year end. But most of the remaining nurses lacked the knowledge about the PFMA, so it is impossible for them to work cost-effectively and increase their knowledge in finance management skills.
- Exposure to attendance to workshop on financial management was also cited as a way that is assisting professional nurses to gain knowledge.

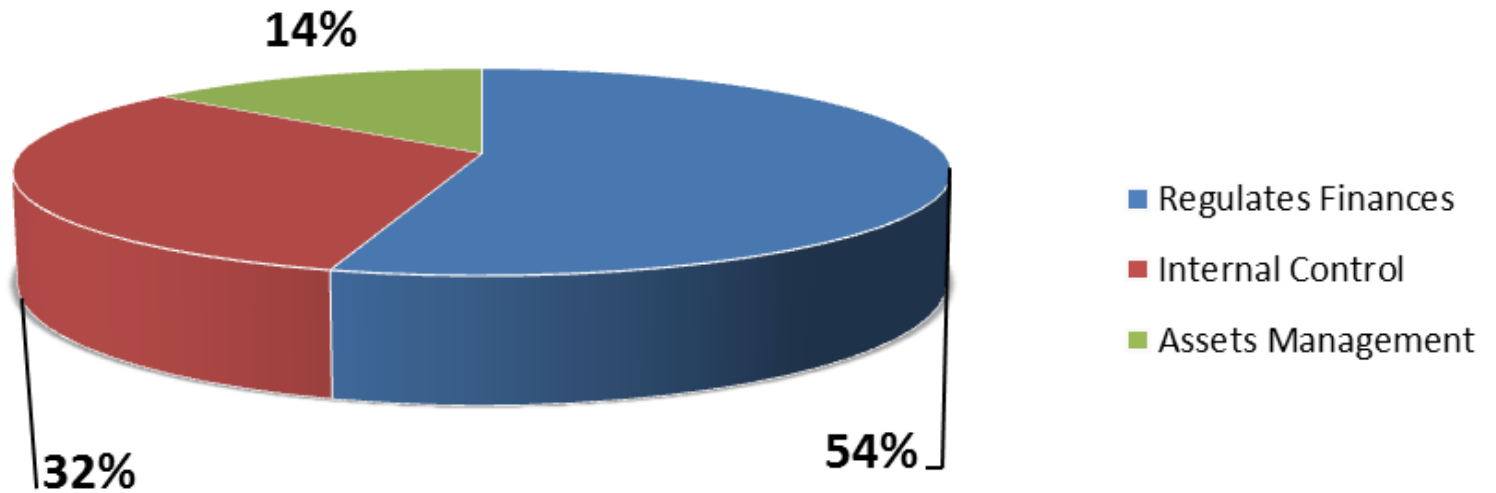


Research results

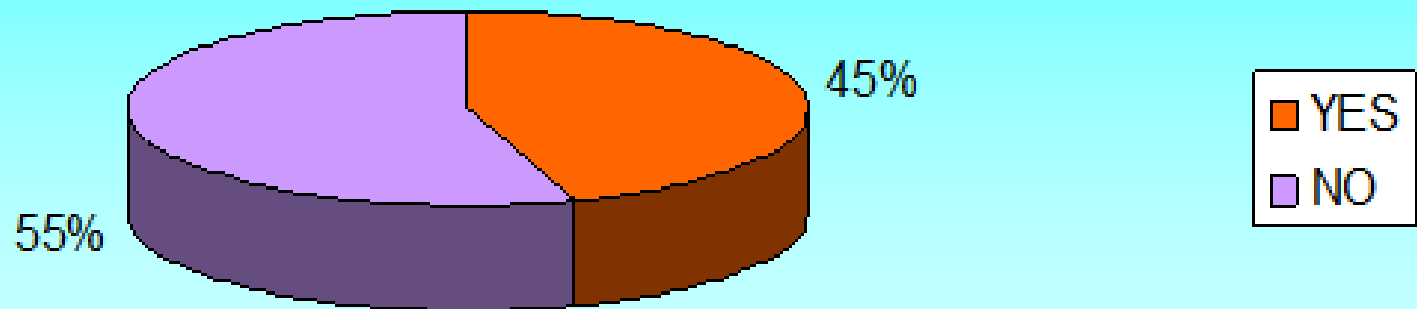
- Those who had exposure to finance management in terms of PFMA ended up finding delight in their work, thus directing energy into personal growth, clinical excellence and positive quality of work life with increased patient satisfaction and financial competency.
- 56% felt that budget needed to be drawn up annually in preparation of new equipment, furniture, drug and supply management. The results indicated that most of professional nurses were only exposed to standard operational plans of drugs supply management, ordering of equipment during their post basic courses.
- The need for professional nurses to have financial skill involved training and workshops as well as external lectures.

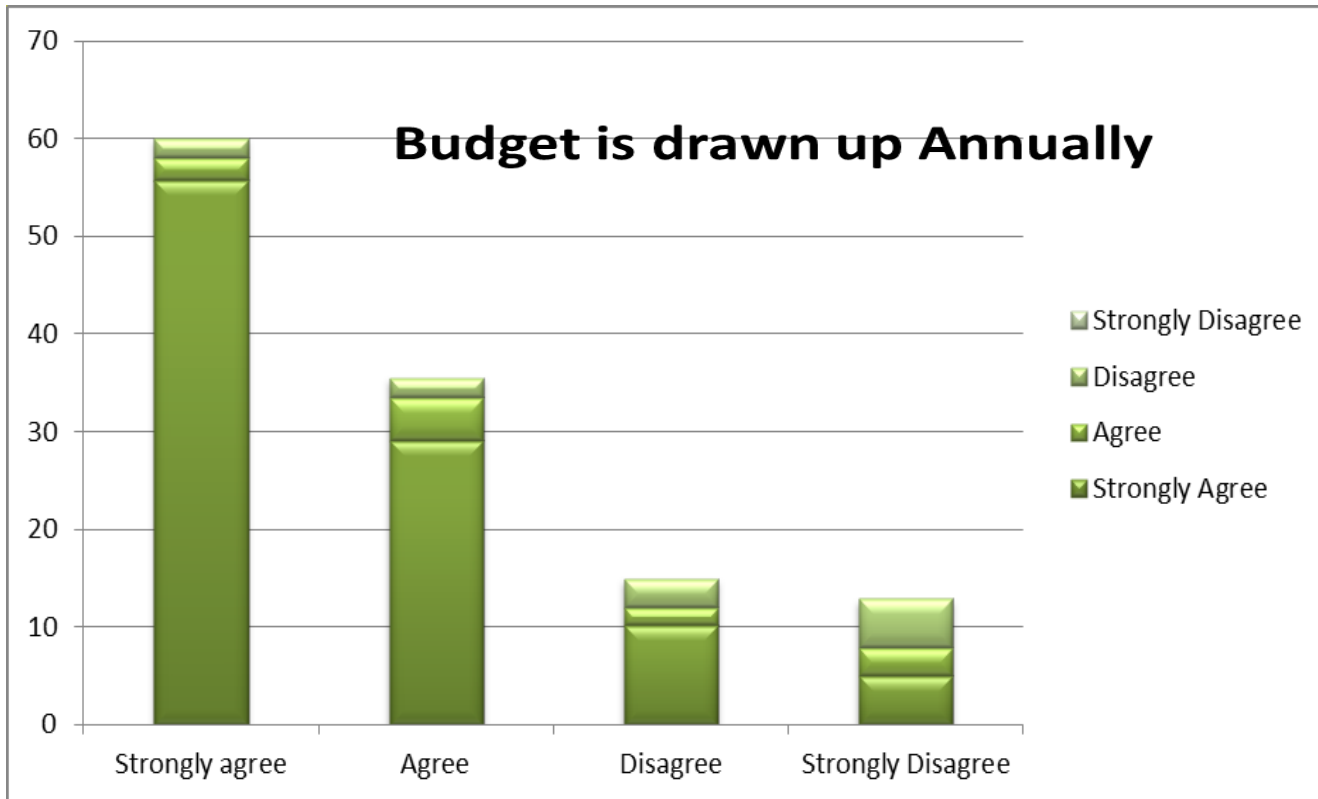


Important Aspects of PMFA

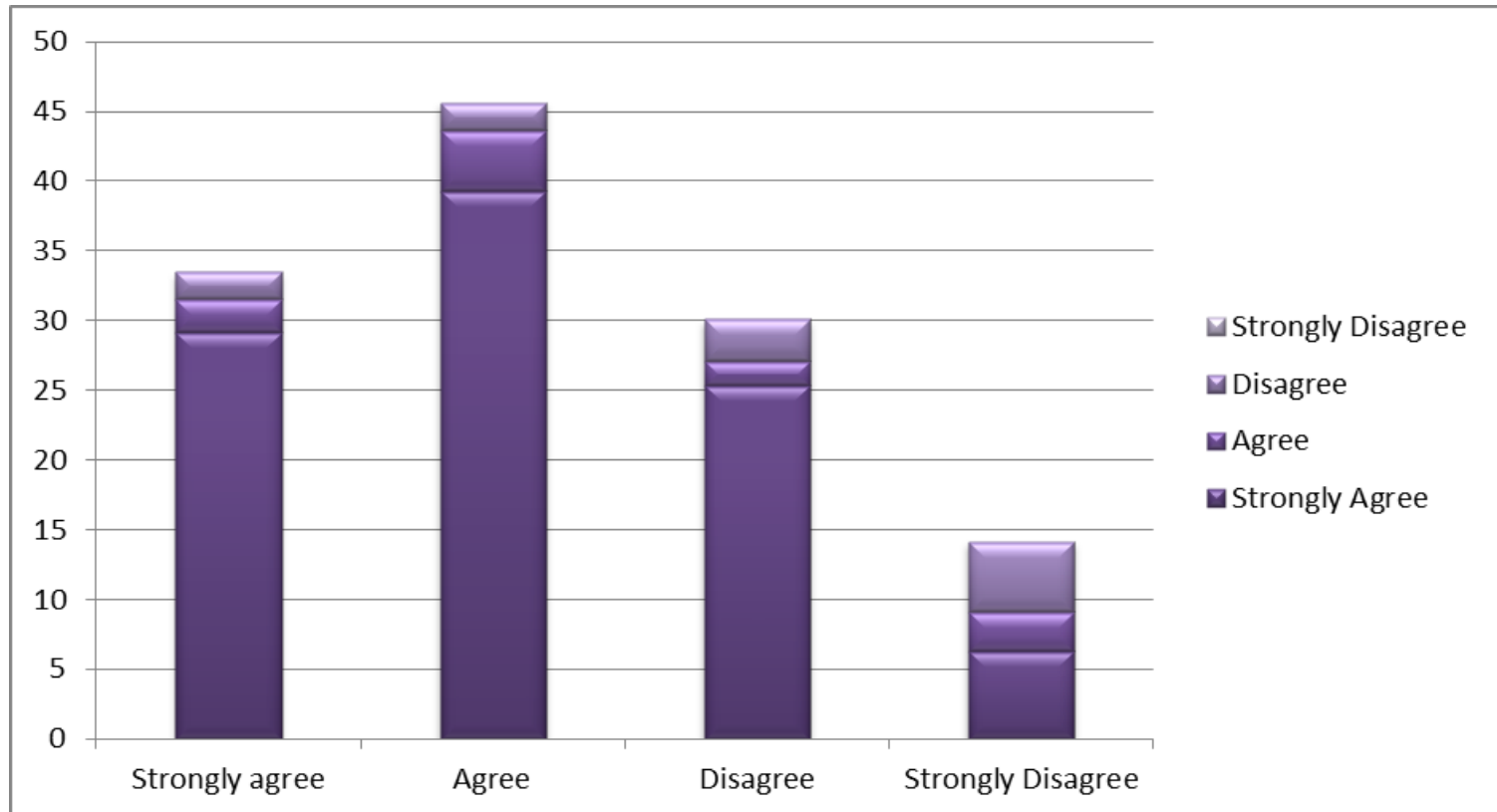


Finance Management Workshop Attendance





Involvement of Professional Nurses in Ordering Suppliers



Recommendations

- The findings of this study highlighted the important role of professional nurses in financial management and the need to decrease incidents of misunderstanding or knowledge deficits relating to the implementation of the PFMA.
- Respondents in this study have limited knowledge about the legislative framework governing the implementation of the PFMA. Also lack knowledge about operational standards for drawing up budgets, ordering of equipment, supplies, etc.



Recommendations

- It therefore seems appropriate for top management to create a supportive and communicative workplace environment to promote taking up ownership for the implementation of the PMDS and involvement of finance management amongst professional nurses .
- Respondents attended workshops poorly in this study. It is therefore recommended that training commence under the supervision of experienced professionals by means of continuous training programmes to ensure that professional nurses know the what, the why and the how of finance management.
- Guidelines and policies as well as standardized protocols should be in place in all CHC`s, for professional nurses to have accessibility to such information.



Conclusions

- Professional nurses are responsible for and play a notably important role in financial management in diverse public healthcare settings. This study successfully explored and described knowledge deficiency as a major barrier to involvement of financial management professional nurses working at selected CHC`s.
- This knowledge deficiency might directly compromise the quality of service delivery and hinder government's commitment to provide all South Africans with improved service in the public sector. The discussion set out above vindicates the fact that a platform to address the problem needs to be established in the interest of the individual employee.



Questions and Comments

