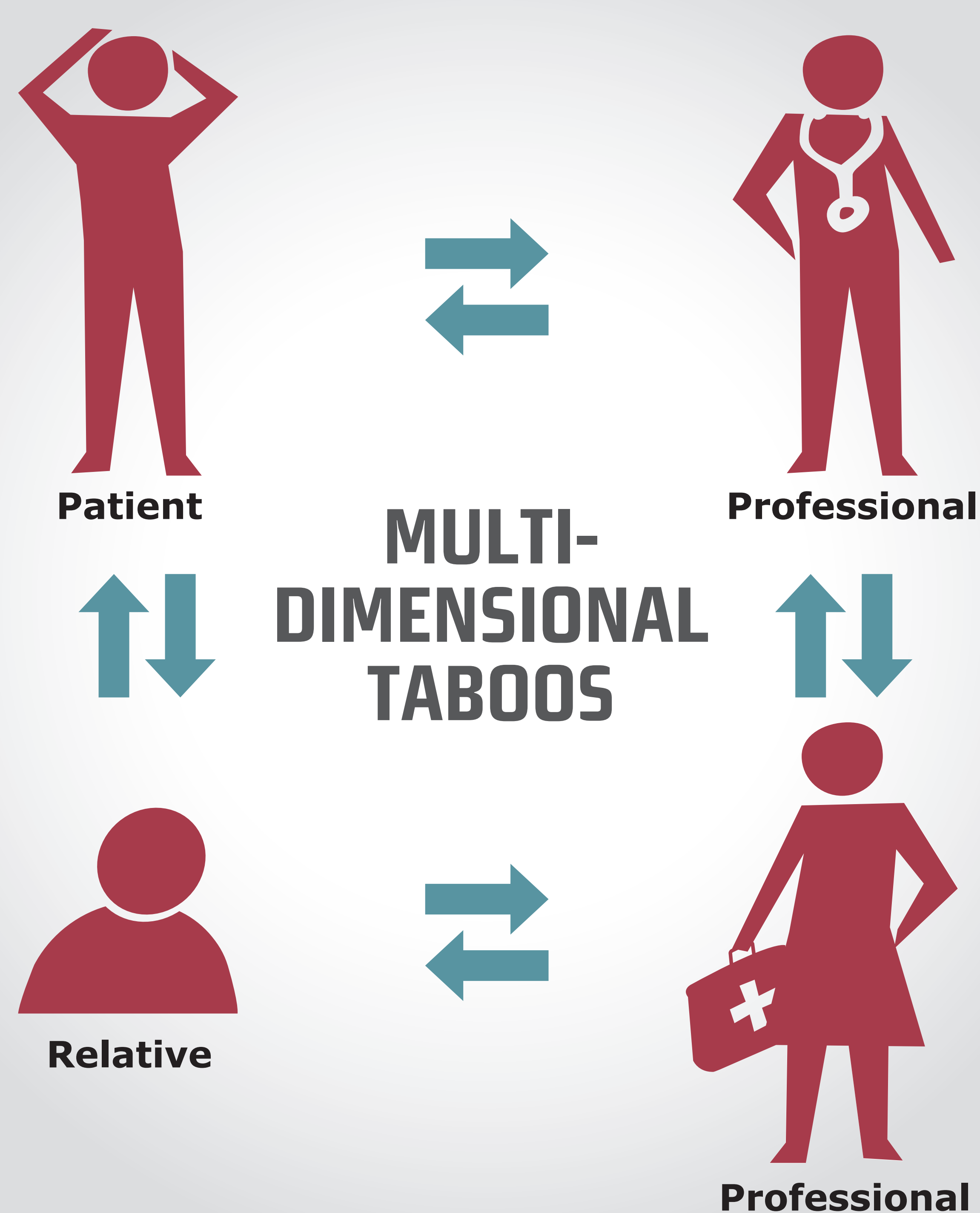


Integration of Sexuality in Hospital Based Rehabilitation after a Brain Injury

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BACKGROUND

A systematic review emphasised the patients need for rehabilitation initiatives addressing sexuality during hospital rehabilitation. A focus group interview, a questionnaire survey and a journal review conducted among rehabilitation professionals showed sexual rehabilitation as an important professional task – however rarely addressed! Further results indicate that sexuality is addressed with professional uncertainty and personal taboos.

AIM

To educate and change the professional identity among nurses in order to meet the patients needs in relation to sexuality – during in-hospital rehabilitation after a moderate to severe brain injury.

INITIATIVES

- Changing the culture of nurses, towards recognizing sexuality, defined from WHO, as a fundamental need in rehabilitation
- Education and training of resource persons from each ward to facilitate dissemination of knowledge to the entire staff
- Theme days for the interdisciplinary staff – taught by a specialist and a former patient
- Development of a sexual policy to guide initiatives at the hospital

RESULTS

- 13 resource persons for sexual rehabilitation have four annual meetings to exchange experiences and coordinate local interventions
- 3 nurses are following a specialized education in sexology
- Journal audits show an increased documentation of sexual aspects from 7% to over 31% over during the first year

FURTHER INITIATIVES AND IMPLICATIONS

- Information available for patients and relatives in the ward environment (poster and booklets)
- A sexual policy providing ethical and guiding description is ready to implementation in late 2019
- Distribution of knowledge and experiences in National Journal of Nurses
- Systematic documentation in relation to sexual rehabilitation towards an evidence based practice
- Further research is needed

