Purpose: The specific aim of this research was to employ summative content analysis to examine textbooks identified as used by faculty teaching pediatric content to nurse practitioner students for content addressing children born preterm (CBP).

Background: Prematurity affects 10% of America’s children. Despite excellent survival rates, CBP have significant potential for physical, psychological, neurodevelopmental and behavioral impairments. Long-term studies suggest that preterm birth conveys life-long health risks which may be overlooked by providers. Research suggests that primary care providers have limited understanding of the evolving science which supports the life-long health and neurodevelopmental risks related to preterm birth. Summative content analysis is a type of qualitative analysis that utilizes specific words or content in text with the purpose of understanding the contextual use of the words or content. This method of analysis has been used with medical and nursing textbooks related to other evolving healthcare priorities.

Problem Statement: Faculty utilize textbooks and other didactic resources to convey the breadth of knowledge required to function as advanced practice providers. It was hypothesized that textbooks would display limited emphasis, not only on the population of CBP, but also on the potential long-term sequelae and risks associated with premature birth.

Methods: Six textbooks published between 2012 and 2017 were identified by faculty teaching pediatric content to nurse practitioners, and also appear on the resource lists for preparation for the primary care pediatric nurse practitioner national certification exam. Summative content analysis was conducted of the 6 textbooks. A detailed list of key content and key words were identified by the researchers and validated by pediatric and neonatal providers. A review grid, with detailed explanations of the content, grouped by age category was constructed. The reviewers utilized a 3-point rating scale in the analysis (absent /no mention of topic = 0, any mention = 1, well discussed = 2). Reviewers conducted independent review of each textbook, and developed consensus scores used in the final analysis.

Results: All textbooks earned high scores on items in the newborn category; scores ranged from 16 to 47, (mean 32.4 ±13.41) out of a possible 92 points. Most textbooks addressed content in the toddler age category that related to persistence of neonatal conditions. Scores for older age categories were suboptimal in all textbooks. All textbooks failed to include CBP as a specific group at risk for delayed for school readiness, disordered development, neurodevelopmental outcomes, recommendations for school performance and supports.

Discussion: Action should be taken to increase the understanding of the ongoing health and neurodevelopmental risks for CBP. Revisions to the curriculum of health care providers: nurses, nurse practitioners, and physicians, should include an emphasis on CBP as a specific population with modifiable risks to future health and well-being. Every health history should include the question: Were you born preterm? And understanding what a positive response means at every stage of life.

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The Villanova University Institutional Review Board reviewed the project and deemed it not subject to federal regulations under HHS 45 CFR 46.

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Background

Children born preterm experience physical, psychosocial, behavioral neurodevelopmental issues and are at increased risk for adult chronic conditions. Research suggests that providers have limited understanding these risks.

Methods

Summative content analysis was conducted of 6 textbooks (2012 to 2017), used in pediatric NP programs and for certification exam preparation.

A detailed list of key content & key words were identified by the researchers & validated by pediatric and neonatal providers.

Results

The specific aim was to examine textbooks used to teach pediatrics to NP students for content related to children born preterm.

Implications for Practice

Action must be taken to educate NPs regarding the modifiable risks to future health and well-being experienced by children born preterm.

Current editions of frequently used textbooks are insufficient in providing this information.

Curriculum & practice-standard revisions are indicated to include long-term risks for children born preterm.

Educators must look to current outcome literature and published reviews for current information.

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