UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Long-Term Care and Geriatric Nursing

2627-3-I0101D016-I0101D051M

Aims

Learning Objectives
Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:
• Understand the main characteristics of the aging process, active aging, and strategies for managing issues related to chronic conditions in older adults. (Knowledge)
• Understand and contextualize the concepts of frailty and disability in older adults, recognizing the role of Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment (CGA) and the main assessment tools used in clinical practice. Understand how to communicate effectively with frail older adults, family caregivers, and members of the multidisciplinary healthcare team. (Knowledge and Understanding)
• Identify and interpret the main signs, symptoms, and clinical data characterizing frail older adults, individuals with disabilities, or patients affected by musculoskeletal disorders, in order to support clinical decision-making in nursing care. (Making Judgements)
• Plan and implement appropriate nursing diagnoses, care outcomes, and nursing interventions throughout the hospital and community care pathways of older adults with chronic and frail conditions. (Applying Knowledge and Understanding / Practical Skills)
• Plan and implement nursing diagnoses, care outcomes, and nursing interventions specific to individuals affected by musculoskeletal disorders. (Applying Knowledge and Understanding / Practical Skills)
• Develop the ability to identify personal learning and professional development needs through clinical reasoning, case analysis, practical exercises, and active learning methodologies. (Learning Skills)

Contents

The course aims to provide students with the theoretical knowledge and methodological tools necessary to identify and address the care needs of older adults experiencing frailty, disability, and chronic conditions. Through the nursing process and the use of Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment (CGA) tools, students will acquire competencies for managing older adults across different healthcare settings, with particular reference to geriatric, orthopedic (across all age groups), and rehabilitation care.

Detailed program

The course content is designed to enable students to:
• Describe the clinical features of the main diseases and geriatric syndromes affecting older adults and altering physiological balance.
• Recognize the underlying pathophysiological mechanisms and identify appropriate therapeutic and nursing approaches.
• Understand the manifestations of the conditions covered through the interpretation of clinical data, signs, and symptoms, which represent key variables for identifying nursing diagnoses, expected outcomes, and related interventions.

Topics Covered

• The frail older person: definition, characteristics, and fundamental principles of geriatrics.
• Models for chronic disease management and introduction to the Chronic Care Model; overview of chronic care approaches.
• Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment (CGA): tools, scales, and applications in clinical practice.
• Promotion of self-care and self-management in older adults with chronic diseases.
• Nursing management of multimorbidity in older adults, with particular reference to major chronic cardiovascular and metabolic diseases and issues related to polypharmacy.
• Cognitive decline, dementia, and delirium: clinical aspects, assessment, and nursing management.
• Nutrition- and hydration-related care issues in older adults.
• Urinary and bowel dysfunction in older adults.
• Musculoskeletal disorders and nursing care in orthopedic (all age groups) and orthogeriatric settings.
• Pain management in older adults.
• Prevention and management of infection risk.
• Oral health issues and their impact on the health status of older adults.
• Fall risk prevention and management.
• Immobility syndrome and sarcopenia.
• Therapeutic education, treatment adherence, and medication management in older adults.

Prerequisites

As defined by the academic regulations of the degree program.

Teaching form

The course consists of 10 two-hour lectures delivered primarily through traditional lectures. At the instructor’s discretion, some sessions may include individual and/or group exercises, educational videos, and narrative-based learning activities. All teaching activities are conducted in person.

Textbook and teaching resource

Textbooks

• Nebuloni, G. (2017). Assistenza infermieristica alla persona anziana. CEA.

• Smeltzer, S.C., Bare, B., Hinkle, J., & Cheever, K. (2017). Brunner & Suddarth's Textbook of Medical-Surgical Nursing, Vols. 1–2. Milan: Casa Editrice Ambrosiana, 5th ed. (Chapter on fractures).

Recommended Readings

• AIFA (2015). Beers Criteria. The American Geriatrics Society (AGS) updates the list of potentially inappropriate medications.
• Italian Ministry of Health Decree No. 77/2022.
• ESPEN Guideline on Hospital Nutrition (2021), Thibault R. et al.
• Italian Ministry of Health (2015). National Guidelines for the Promotion of Oral Health and Prevention of Oral Diseases in Adulthood.
• Italian Ministry of Health (2024). National Chronicity Plan – 2024 Update.
• Montero-Odasso et al. (2022). World Guidelines for Falls Prevention and Management for Older Adults: A Global Initiative. Age and Ageing, 51, 1–36.
• National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) (2010). Delirium: Diagnosis, Prevention and Management.
• Olenek, K. (2003). Geriatric Nursing Assessment. Journal of Gerontological Nursing, 29(8), 5–9.
• Pilotto, A. et al. (2024). The Italian Guideline on Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment (CGA) for Older Persons: A Collaborative Work of 25 Italian Scientific Societies and the National Institute of Health. Aging Clinical and Experimental Research, 36, 121.
• Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO) (2009). Oral Health Nursing Assessment and Intervention.
• RNAO (2005). Promoting Continence Using Prompted Voiding.
• RNAO (2005). Prevention of Constipation in the Older Adult Population.
• RNAO (2006). Screening for Delirium, Depression and Dementia in Older Adults.
• Trifirò, G., Incrasciotta, Y., & Caputi, A.P. (2014). Medication Use in Older Patients: Critical Issues. G Gerontol, 62, 64–68.
• American Academy of Neurology (AAN) Guidelines.
• Italian Society of Urology (SIU) Guidelines on Urinary Incontinence in Adults.

Semester

Third Academic Year – First Semester

Assessment method

Written examination consisting of:
• 10 multiple-choice questions, with only one correct answer;
• 4 short open-ended questions based on a clinical nursing case related to the topics covered during the course.
Assessment criteria:
• Open-ended questions: score from 0 to 5 points each (passing threshold: 12/20).
• Multiple-choice questions: 1 point for each correct answer (passing threshold: 6/10).

Office hours

By appointment via email to the course instructors or the Course Coordinator.
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Sustainable Development Goals

GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING | QUALITY EDUCATION | GENDER EQUALITY | REDUCED INEQUALITIES | PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS