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ATTITUDES OF MEDICINE AND NURSING STUDENTS TOWARDS THE SEXUALITY OF OLDER PEOPLE

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There is a paucity of research in attitudes of undergraduate students of medicine and nursing regarding sexuality of patients namely the older people. In previous studies we paid attention on staff attitudes of residential homes to aged people in what concerns with sexuality. With the same methodology, in this study it was evaluated the attitudes of undergraduate students of medicine and nursing and resident's on psychiatry towards the sexuality of older people.

Design: A descriptive questionnaire survey using the attitudinal part of Aging Sexual Knowledge and Attitudes Scale (ASKAS).

Participants and setting: Students of medicine and nursing of Oporto University.

We know from previous studies that little experience in the work with older people is predictive of negative attitudes towards sexuality. Nevertheless, in this sample we found a mean ASKAS score of 66 which reflects moderately positive and permissive attitudes toward later life sexuality. Medicine students were more permissive than nursing students ($p < 0.01$).

Conclusions: Undergraduate students and psychiatry residents have positive attitudes toward sexuality of older people. Later life sexuality study should be included in the curriculum of undergraduate formation of doctors and nurses.