Knowledge Gaps in Sepsis Among the Public and Healthcare Professionals: Effective Educational Programs Developed for High Risk Sepsis Patients and Caregivers: An Integrative Review of the Literature

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Effective Educational Programs Developed for High Risk Sepsis Patients & Caregivers
An Integrative Review of Literature
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Sepsis is a common clinical condition with a high mortality rate. Prompt recognition and treatment improves patient outcomes. The existing educational programs & barriers frequently encountered by patients with sepsis are examined.

Questions
- What current programs are provided to high risk sepsis patients?
- What additional components need to be included in an educational program to result in patients seeking medical attention promptly?

Methods and Materials
An integrative literature review design was used to provide a comprehensive examination of literature regarding the factors leading to an increased risk of sepsis and educational programs that already exist to increase awareness of sepsis.

See Table 1 for Inclusion & Exclusion Criteria

The Health Belief Model (HBM) was used to guide this review.
See Figure 1 for The Health Belief Model

Results
- A lack of sepsis awareness is apparent.
- Research on existing patient directed sepsis education is limited.
- Existing educational programs that surveyed patients before and after an educational program showed there was an increased understanding and awareness for patients.
- However, the nature and ambiguity of sepsis may contribute to the lack of understanding and lack of research.

Discussion and Conclusions
- It was reported that sepsis is a leading cause of avoidable death, yet other leading causes of avoidable death, such as myocardial infarctions or stroke, are much better understood by the public.
- Existing educational programs are effective.
- This may be because symptoms of sepsis are often misattributed and the severity of the condition is often difficult to initially differentiate, which previous studies discuss as barriers in prompt diagnosis.
- Due to the fact sepsis is more indistinct, public health education will likely need to be approached differently than it is for other conditions.
- The complexity of sepsis needs to be considered. Identifying those most at risk and create a standardized education protocol for those patients would be a good start.