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Textbook on Professional Trends and Adjustments in Nursing



I Clement

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4 Expanded Role of the Nurse

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Contemporary nursing requires that the nurse possess knowledge and skills in a variety of areas. In the past, the principal role of nurses was to provide care and comfort as they carried out specific nursing functions, but changes in nursing have expanded the role to include increased emphasis on health promotion and illness prevention, as well as concern for the client as a whole. The contemporary nurse functions in the interrelated roles of care giver, clinical and ethical decision maker, protector and client advocate, case manager, rehabilitator, comforter, communicator, and teacher.

4.2 CARE GIVER

As care giver, the nurse helps the client regain health through the healing process. Healing is more than just curing a specific disease, although treatment skills that promote physical healing are important to care givers. The nurse addresses the holistic health care needs of the client, including measures to restore emotional, spiritual, and social well-being. The care giver helps the client and family set goals and meet those goals with a minimal cost of time and energy.

4.3 CLINICAL DECISION MAKER

To provide effective care, the nurse uses critical thinking skills throughout the nursing process. Before undertaking any nursing action, whether it is assessing the client's condition, giving care, or evaluating the results of care, the nurse plans the action by deciding the best approach for each client. The nurse makes these decisions alone or in collaboration with the client and family. In each of these situations, the nurse collaborates and consults with other health care professionals.

4.4 PROTECTOR AND CLIENT ADVOCATE

As protector, the nurse helps maintain a safe environment for the client and takes steps to prevent injury and protect the client from possible adverse effects of diagnostic or treatment measures. Confirming that a client does not have an allergy to a medication and providing immunization against disease in a community-based practice are examples of the nurse's protective role. In the role of client advocate, the nurse protects the client's human and legal rights and provides assistance in asserting those rights if the need arises. For example, the nurse may provide additional information for a client who is trying to decide whether to accept treatment. The nurse may also defend clients' rights in a general way by speaking out against policies or actions that might endanger client's well-being or conflict with their rights.

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4.5 CASE MANAGER

As case manager, the nurse coordinates the activities of other members of the health care team, such as nutritionists and physical therapists, when managing a group of clients' care. In addition, nurses must also manage the own time and the resources of the practice settings. Differentiated practice models offer nurses opportunities to decisions about their career paths.

4.6 REHABILITATOR

Rehabilitation is the process by which individual's return to maximal levels of functioning after illness, other disabling events. Frequently, clients experience physical or emotional impairments that change their lives, and the nurse helps them adapt as fully as possible. Rehabilitative and restorative care activities range from teaching clients to walk with crutches to helping clients cope with lifestyle changes often associated with chronic illness.

4.7 COMFORTER

Comforter: The role of comforter, caring for the client as a person, is a traditional and historical one in nursing and has continued to be important as nurses have assumed new roles. Because nursing care must be directed to the whole person rather than simply the body, comfort and emotional support often help give the client strength to recover. While carrying out nursing activities, nurses can provide comfort by demonstrating care for the client as an individual with unique feelings and needs. As comforter, nurses should help the client reach therapeutic goals rather than encourage emotional or physical dependence.

4.8 COMMUNICATOR

The role of communicator is central to all oilier nursing roles. Nursing involves communication with clients and families, other nurses and health care professionals, resource persons, and the community. The quality of communication is a critical factor in meeting the needs of individuals, families, and communities.

4.9 TEACHER

As teacher, the nurse explains to clients concepts and facts about health, demonstrates procedures such as self-care activities, determines that the client fully understands, reinforces learning or client behavior, anti evaluates.

Progress in learning or client behavior, and evaluates progress in learning. Some teaching can be unplanned and informal, such as when a nurse responds to a question about a health issue in casual conversation. Other teaching activities may be planned and more formal, such as when the nurse teaches a client with diabetes to self-administer insulin injections. The nurse uses teaching methods that match the client's capabilities and needs and incorporates other resources, such as the family, in teaching plans.

4.10 CAREER ROLES

The proceeding roles and functions apply to all nurses in most practice settings.

Career roles, on the other hand, are specific employment positions. Because of increasing educational opportunities for nurses, the growth of nursing as a profession, and greater concern

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for job enrichment, the nursing profession offers expanded roles and different kinds of career opportunities. Examples of career roles include, nurse educators and advanced practice nurses, such as clinical nurse specialists, nurse practitioners, certified nurse midwives, anesthetists, administrators, and researchers. Additional no clinical roles include, risk managers, quality improvement nurses, and product consultants.

4.11 NURSE EDUCATOR

A nurse educator works primarily in schools of nursing, stall development departments (health care agencies, and client education departments. Nursing educators generally have a background in clinical nursing, which provides them with practical skills and theoretical knowledge. A faculty member in a school of nursing prepares students to function as nurses.

Nursing faculty members are responsible for teaching current nursing practice theory and necessary skills in laboratories or clinical settings. Nurse educators in nursing schools are usually required to have graduate degrees in nursing education. In addition, they generally have a specific clinical specialty and advanced clinical experience.

Nurse educators in staff development departments of health care institutions provide educational programs for nurses within their institution. These programs include orientation of new personnel, critical care nursing courses and instruction about new equipment or procedures. The primary focus of the nurse educator in an agency's department of client education is to teach or disabled clients and families to provide care in the home. In most of the care agencies, however, time budget dues not permit a separate client education department. Therefore, staff nurses usually incorporate education into a client's plan of care.

4.12 ADVANCED PRACTICE NURSE

The advanced practice nurse (APN) has a master's degree in nursing, advanced education in pharmacology and physical assessment, and certification and expertise in a specialized area of practice (American Nurse association, 1995). An APN usually works in primary, acute, restorative, or community health care agency. In addition, arm APN may specialize in the management of a disease such as cancer, diabetes, or cardiovascular or pulmonary disease or in a specific field such as pediatrics or gerontology.

4.13 CLINICAL NURSE SPECIALIST

Clinical nurse specialist: The clinical nurse specialist (CNS) has a master's degree in nursing and expertise in a specialized area of practice. A CNS may work in primary care, acute care, restorative care, and community-based settings. In addition, the CNS may specialize in specific diseases such as diabetes mellitus, cancer, or congestive heart failure or in a specific field such as pediatrics or gerontology. The CNS functions as an expert clinician, educator, case in manager, consultant, and researcher to plan or improve the quality of care provided to the client and family.

4.14 NURSE PRACTITIONER

The nurse practitioner provides health care to clients, usually in an outpatient, ambulatory care, or community-based setting and comprehensiveness of care. A significant percentage of primary care encounters extend beyond the boundaries of medicine and demand the expertise of the nurse. The nurse practitioner is able to establish a collaborative provider-client relationship. The major nurse practitioner categories are adult, family, pediatric, obstetrics- gynecology, and geriatric nurse

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practitioner. A nurse practitioner has the knowledge and skills necessary to detect and manage limited acute and chronic stable conditions. The nurse practitioner's educational preparation includes a practitioner program or a master's degree in nursing.

4.15 ADULT NURSE PRACTITIONER

Adult nurse practitioner (ANP) provides primary, ambulatory care to adults with a non-emergency acute or chronic illness, and in some settings tertiary care. ANPs are usually employed in ambulatory care centers or outpatient clinics and work in collaboration with a primary physician.

4.16 FAMILY NURSE PRACTITIONER

A family nurse practitioner (FNP) provides primary ambulatory care for families, usually in collaboration with a family care physician. The FNP meets the family's general health care needs, manages some illnesses by providing direct care, and guides or counsels the family as needed.

4.17 PEDIATRIC NURSE PRACTITIONER

A pediatric nurse practitioner (PNP) provides health care to infants and children. An obstetrics-gynecology nurse practitioner (OBGYN) provides primary ambulatory care to women seeking obstetrical or gynecological health care. The nurse practitioner who is also a certified nurse-midwife may independently deliver infants. GNP provides ambulatory or inpatient care to older adults. The GNP's activities include interventions for health maintenance, illness prevention, or health restoration.

4.18 CERTIFIED NURSE-MIDWIFE

Certified nurse-midwife (CNM): A CNM is an RN who is also educated in midwifery and is certified by the American College of Nurse-Midwives. The practice of nurse- midwifery involves providing independent care for women during normal pregnancy, labor, and delivery, as well as care for the newborn; it may include some gynecological services such as routine Papanicolaou (Pap) smears, family planning, and treatment for minor vaginal infections. A CNM practices with a health care agency that provides medical consultation, collaborative management and referral.

4.19 NURSE ANESTHETIST

A nurse anesthetist is an registered nurse (RN) who has received advanced training in an accredited program in anesthesiology. Nurse anesthetists provide surgical anesthesia under the guidance and supervision of an anesthesiologist, who is a physician with advanced knowledge of surgical anesthesia.

4.20 NURSE ADMINISTRATOR

Nurse administrator: A nurse administrator manages client care and the delivery of specific nursing services within a health care agency. This administrator may hold a middle-management position, such as head nurse or supervisor, or an upper-level management position, such as assistant or associate director or director of nursing services. Functions of administrators include, budgeting, staffing, strategic planning of programs and services, employee evaluation, and

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employee development. Middle-management position usually requires at least a baccalaureate degree in nursing, and upper-level positions generally require a master's degree.

4.21 NURSE RESEARCHER

The nurse researcher investigates problems to improve nursing care and to further define and expand the scope of nursing practice. The nurse researcher may be employed in an academic setting, hospital, or independent professional or community-service agency. The minimum educational requirement is now a doctoral degree, with at least a master's degree in nursing.

CONCLUSION

The nurses in India are also prepared and more privileged to face the changes and ready to accept the challenging roles and functions of the nurse as perceived in the globe because of the development in the education and training system. Contemporary nursing requires that the nurse possess knowledge and skills in a variety of areas. In the past the principal role of nurses was to provide care and comfort as they carried out specific nursing functions, but changes in nursing have expanded the role to include increased emphasis on health promotion and illness prevention, as well as concern for the client as a whole. The contemporary nurse functions in the interrelated roles of care giver, clinical and ethical decision maker, protector and client advocate, case manager, rehabilitator, comforter, communicator, and teacher.

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