

Cultural Safety in Health Care

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Introduction

Good communication is a must for a great, healthy environment. That, when mixed with health literacy, can change the face of the health of any country. Both of them make a huge difference in the lives of the people, allowing them to make a decision based on knowing all the possible outcomes. In this research, we will discuss the importance of effective communication and health literacy when it comes to providing a culturally safe environment in a workplace. Along with that, the various ways through which one can achieve them will be mentioned to achieve greater results.

Effective Communication And Health Literacy

Communication is the to and fro of information from one source to another. It is very effective for the smooth functioning of information. In order to succeed in any sector, effective communication acts as a solid base. It helps convey the true message, making it easier to understand the message across all channels. Health literacy is a situation in which individuals have the ability and power to acquire as much information about health as possible. This helps them to make better and more informed decisions about their own health and that of their loved ones. Both effective communication and health literacy are areas that are a must when it comes to providing a culturally safe environment. Low literacy is a huge issue in Australia (Johnson, 2014). In fact, according to research by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, more than 55% of people in Australia who fall in the age group of 15-74 years do not have sufficient knowledge and information when it comes to health literacy in their nation. This includes basic information about how to manage their basic health.

Importance Of Effective Communication And Health Literacy

Less health literacy and poor communication are sure roads to failure, especially when one has recruited a new staff board. Bad communication leads to more cases of unsatisfied patients, which causes a bad name for the particular medical institute. This may even lead to poor health conditions, causing the patient to suffer a lot. The difference in terms of culture, language, or thinking between the medical staff and the patient is something that can have huge repercussions on both of their lives. Poor communication at times may lead to conflicts and misunderstandings and may lead to severe court cases. This, when added to limited health literacy, has a very bad impact on the overall health care of the nation. This is why there needs to be proper attention to providing the staff with the

best health literacy along with proper communication at all times (Arnold & Boggs, 2015). Investing in good communication and health literacy at times of new recruitment can reap great benefits for society.

Health literacy is gaining immense importance across the globe. There are various factors that affect the health literacy of any nation. The cultural, social, psychological, etc. aspects play a huge role in communicating with people about the various policies and plans for health and their service provider. It is even influenced by the level of education of the person receiving and giving it, especially the new staff recruited at the institute. Health literacy, when combined with effective communication, can change the face of health care for the betterment of society (Kourkouta & Papathanasiou, 2014). The importance of effective communication and health literacy:

- **Better communication leads to better treatment:** If the communication between the staff and the patient is smooth and clear, it will help the staff to treat the patient in the best way possible. All the issues highlighted by the patient will be taken into consideration, and the patient will be treated accordingly. Better communication would make the staff understand the major concerns that a patient may be going through, which would help them diagnose and treat them effectively.
- **Empowering the people:** Health literacy allows a person to make better decisions for themselves. Therefore, the new staff should provide the patient with as much information as possible that would help them in making informed decisions for themselves. This will also allow the patient to understand the seriousness of his condition and encourage them to take the necessary steps that are required for a better recovery (Beauchamp. et al., 2015). This may even make them aware of situations that could have been avoided if provided with the right information.
- **Good relationship:** Good communication is a solid base between the patient and the staff of the workplace. People start treating each other like family, making it easier for them to care for one another. It is said that mental health is the first base for physical health. The mental piece provided with effective communication and high health literacy can give the term medical care a whole new meaning.
- **Equal treatment to all:** Effective communication and good health literacy are huge factors that make people feel equal. As every patient is treated the same and provided with the same level of information by the new staff at the workplace, they feel happy about it. There is no discrimination on the basis of status or gender, making them feel equally connected with the staff and helping them recover in a friendly environment.
- **More skilled and talented employees:** Health literacy is not only beneficial for the people being treated but is also an asset to the new staff working at the workplace. Health literacy allows them to learn various know-how about a disease, helping them convey the same to the patient (Couture. et al., 2017). This will lead to better skill and knowledge development of the staff, resulting in better outcomes.
- **Removes the culture or any other barrier:** Communication can be really tough at times of cultural or language differences. With effective communication on board, the new staff at the

workplace would work towards the removal of any barrier in the culturally safe environment of health care. This allows them to feel comfortable sharing their issues and problems, which is necessary for better health care. The same goes for the staff also. They also feel that they are part of the culture and are building a solid foundation at the workplace.

All these points help us realize how much effective communication and health literacy are crucial for the development of better health standards for the country. These set a strong base on which better plans and policies related to health and other issues can be set. There are various issues that one may face while making them a reality. As the staff is new and not so well informed about the workplace, there is a chance that communication may take some time (Bramhall, 2014). There are various ways through which the new staff at the workplace can improve health literacy and effective communication, making it easier for everyone involved in the process.

- **Patient-centered communication:** The utmost focus should be on providing the best information to the patient. All the information provided by the new staff at the workplace should be patient-centric. As the patient is a layman and may not have good knowledge about all the technical details of the medical field, the staff should communicate with them in the easiest way possible. Providing them with the best health literacy by informing them about all the symptoms of the illness or disease can be really effective in making a sound decision for them. The staff needs to pay enough attention to the patient to understand their issues, both physical and mental (Batterham. et al., 2016). This will help them get better treatment in the long haul.
- **Gain as much knowledge as possible:** A very good way to improve effective communication and health literacy among the new staff at the workplace is by conducting training programs for them. As they are new to the work, proper training and orientation are a must. This will allow them to understand the process of communicating with the patient and gain the proper health literacy, helping them provide the same to the patient. This is a great way to establish an interpersonal relationship focusing on improving the health of the patient along with the health policies governing the institute (Lambert & Keogh, 2014). This will allow the sender to send the exact message and the receiver to receive it in the proper way leaving very less room for any mistake.

Conclusion

After analyzing the importance of effective communication and health literacy, it is quite clear that it is a definite ingredient for a well-built health system. It will fill the gap of discrimination that is very prominent in society. It will also allow the patient to know every detail of their well-being, allowing them to decide their own course of the path for a better healthy environment. Thus, one can conclude that investing in effective communication with health literacy in a workplace with new staff is really necessary to build that strong relationship for the overall betterment of health and prosperity of the nation in the future. All this is really a must when it comes to improving health outcomes for the nation.

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