

Effective Application Of Interprofessional Communication In Nursing Practice

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Introduction

Interprofessional communication practice is the product of interactions taking place between healthcare professionals, which includes families of patients, patients, and the community. Interprofessional communication embodies responsibility, collaboration, and transparency as critical functions for efficiently helping the patient achieve their respective needs and goals. The promotion of trust and respect in communication between various stakeholders of the healthcare service delivery process to the patient is instrumental for applying Interprofessional communication within healthcare settings, specifically in the practice of nursing professionals. Additionally, the instrument of mutual respect flourishes in patient well-being because it creates a vibrant service delivery environment based on the creation of collaborative plans, setting shared goals, sharing responsibilities, and making efficient decision-making. Nurse practitioners who apply interprofessional communication at their workplaces tend to actively pay attention to non-verbal and verbal communication, coupled with efficient utilization of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), which enhances patients' well-being.

Foronda et al. (2016) research findings suggest that miscommunication adversely affects patient outcomes. Moreover, nurses differ in communication styles from physicians, which consequently decreases the overall trust level. However, interprofessional communication among nursing professionals requires capacity-building training programs based on the utilization of standardized tools and simulation techniques. A few of the critical factors highlighted in the research study are team science, valuing diversity, cultural humility, and patient safety. Treatment plans are the prioritized goals of patients and a shared understanding on the part of nursing professionals in coordination with physicians, and other stakeholders enhances treatment outcomes. Additionally, interprofessional practices involve decision-making related to debate, consultation, negotiation, discussion, or interaction as techniques for achieving effectiveness in the healthcare service delivery processes. The University of Toronto (2017) report on interprofessional practices in healthcare settings states, "Interprofessional communication builds trust and understanding, which leads to better patient-centred health outcomes."

Joint Commission (2015) establishes the link between poor patient outcomes and miscommunication, which consequently results in delayed treatment, patient injury, misdiagnosis, death, and medication errors. Nursing professionals, like other professionals working towards patient-centred treatments, rely on improving the effectiveness of the communication taking place between various stakeholders

within the healthcare setting. Foronda et al. (2016) research emphasizes the factors that hinder communication effectively between various stakeholders in the process, and differences in the communication style of physicians and nursing professionals further deteriorate the situation. Interprofessional communication skills increase with an understanding of diversity, and capacity-building training with standardized simulation techniques and other related tools can serve the purpose. Diversity is not limited to culture, and it includes gender orientation and income inequality, among other variables. Additionally, offering new courses on 'patient safety' to the academic curriculum can also unite the professions and increase the well-being of all the stakeholders.

Analysis & Explanation

Nursing Roles and Interprofessional Communication:

Interprofessional Communication plays a key role in nursing practice at various stages of the nursing career. The practising functionality, capacity, and competency of practising nurses determine their nursing role. For example, in the case of public health nurses, interprofessional communication is necessary for achieving goals regarding the well-being of patients. The collaboration among team members, working together of different nurses from different backgrounds, and delivering high-care results owe to strong interprofessional communication. Moreover, such communication competency in public health nurses enhances patients' outcomes, lessens medical errors, improves an optimal working environment, and progresses their learning. Similarly, as a CNO, interprofessional communication enhances learning capacity, community service awareness, and clarity about medical concepts and promotes teamwork spirit. In addition, college and trainee nurses learn to improve day-to-day working efficiency, cost-effective approach, protection of patients, and adequate access to the medical histories of the respective patients (Franz et al. 2020).

Moreover, interprofessional communication improves the leadership behaviour of nurses in the managerial cadre. Effective communication helps exert a formative influence on the unit manager and all team members (Granheim et al., 2018). For example, a unit manager can effectively ask the subordinates to review lab results, assign duties to juniors according to their capacity, and guide them regarding certain cases. Calling for members, conducting meetings, discussing specific issues, and resolving individual problems on the part of members, patients, and families of patients are certain duties of the unit head in healthcare systems. In addition, they are responsible for collecting relevant information relating to any patient, making decisions, responding to and handling families, managing conflict, implementing orders, enhancing the performance efficiency of team members, etc. To address all these issues and perform said duties, unit heads require strong interprofessional communication. These skills enhance the functional roles of the unit head in modern healthcare systems.

Assisted Living Facility (ALF) and Leadership:

Assisted Living Facility (ALF) is a residence for the older adult population and people with disability, while the settings are parallel to the retirement home. The design of the ALF housing facility aims to entertain the healthcare and other needs of adults who are unable to organize their lives independently. The role of leadership is instrumental to ALF housing facilities due to the 'social model' of care, which is because the industry dominates with providers that work for profit. The leadership requirements of ALF residents are diverse due to the diverse needs of the group. Transformational leadership style is most suited to the ALF leadership because it takes into account collaborative efforts and relies on dedicated effort on the part of a diverse workforce. Nursing professionals in leadership positions in ALF need to rely on the diverse skill base of the workforce to enhance residents' well-being. Additionally, the whole of the residence is a vibrant unit, and interprofessional communication enhances the well-being of residents. Nursing professionals at ALF's leadership position shall work towards building an environment where trust and coordination between diverse teams may take place to cater to the needs of residents. Transformational leadership at ALF has the potential to create trust and an efficient coordination mechanism between various stakeholders.

Professional potential growth of an RN in Assisted Living Facility:

The Assisted Living Facility helps elderly, unwell, and disabled citizens to facilitate their quality of life. Multiple functions are associated with registered nurses in these ALFs. Ahlstedt et al. (2019) argued that the demand for RNs, according to their capability and experience, is high in an assisted living facility compared to other nurses. These centres have high growth potential and opportunities in multiple ways. Various benefits and opportunities include high pay packages, chances to be promoted to managerial ranks, higher educational options, a choice to be a nurse educator, and impact-oriented positions. In addition, registered nurses have the growth potential to channel and excel in their competencies in multiple directions under the umbrella of the assisted living facility. For example, they have the opportunity to perform the role of a geriatric nurse, i.e., work with elderly patients and handle them. Similarly, registered nurses can be Assisted Living directors/administrators. In this way, they can polish their competencies by managing the assistant staff, overseeing admission matters, looking after available facilities, and handling financial matters. Meanwhile, they can adopt roles as long-term care nurses or critical nurse positions as well as wellness nurses to improve and enhance the life quality of residents and patients.

Furthermore, registered nurses have the option to polish their potential by becoming nurse advocates. The main link between medical professionals and patients, as well as their families, is advocate nurses. The well-being of the patient and their family is the ultimate goal of the advocate nurse, who discusses procedures, treatment billing, and alternative treatments. In addition, these registered nurses have the potential growth opportunities as psychiatric nurses. They can upheave their capacity by resolving mental health issues and handling people with mental health conditions. Similarly, they have the choice to serve as health policy nurses to formulate policies, travel nurses, or

pain management nurses. In all these positions, registered nurses can achieve potential growth with a cherishing career, good remunerations, and satisfaction by serving humanity.

Career Advancement in Assisted Living Facility (ALF):

Job demand for caring for seniors is on the rise, and the rising trend is due to the rise of the ageing population in the United States. As per the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the demand for assisted living jobs is going to rise dramatically over the next ten years. For example, jobs of certified nursing assistants (CNAs) have an estimated figure of forty-one per cent rise in the ten years (2016-2026) (Harper, 2018). Additionally, job opportunities for licensed vocational nurses (LVNs) and practical nurses (LPNs) have the potential of relatively higher growth vis-à-vis other professions, that is, fourteen per cent over the aforementioned ten years. Apart from opportunities in financial terms, career advancement in ALF requires interprofessional communication skills between various stakeholders and a diverse workforce serving residents. At a personal level, nursing professionals need to create a facilitative environment for collaboration between professionals and service providers to serve the resident's physical, psychological, and social needs. Additionally, information and communication technologies (ICTs) provide an additive edge to nursing professionals in the delivery of care services to elderly adults and differently abled residents of ALF. Not only can residents of ALF stay connected to the outside world, but the opportunities for nursing professionals to efficiently coordinate with a diverse workforce also increase.

Impediments to Career Advancement in Assisted Living Facility (ALF):

Every person, in alliance with strengths, has some weaknesses and threats regarding professional life. Similarly, the nurses also possess the same set of weaknesses and threats that can block ALF's career advancement. Maalouf et al. (2018) stated that the top-ranking weakness is an emotional attachment to patients and their family members. This weakness breeds long-lasting effects on the treatment and care of respective patients. The other weaknesses include fear of critical conditions in patients, inability to work with body fluids, and giving too much time to unnecessary details. The above of these weaknesses on the part of nurses is unpunctuality, which can stick to a career in ALF.

Furthermore, various threats can lead to blocking the nursing career in ALF. The most dangerous among them is infectious diseases among nurses. The nature of work in healthcare units has made nurses vulnerable to several infections. For example, hepatitis, tuberculosis, and HIV etc. Similarly, the main threat to a career, as well as the health and life of a nurse, is exposure to radiation and chemicals during work. In addition, various allergies and health issues can lead to a ruined nursing career in ALF. Meanwhile, the other threats to the career are compulsory overtime, mental stress, workplace violence, and job insecurity.

Personality traits essential for a good nurse leader:

Leadership traits and qualities are the backbones of the nursing profession in modern times. Effective leadership skills are mandatory for optimal delivery of healthcare services in this regard. Practising nurses should have as many leadership traits as they can gain and achieve through hard work and constant struggle. A good nurse leader's most prominent leadership traits should be emotional intelligence, effective communication skills, and conflict resolution. Lacking any leadership trait from these can result in chaos in patient care and medical services. As human beings, we have emotions regarding ongoing circumstances, and most people express their emotions with zeal and zest. However, in healthcare setups and management, nurse leaders must control their own emotions as well as guide the subordinate staff to control their emotions. The handling of the delicate situation in hospitals and health centres is the responsibility of the nurse leader (Wang et al., 2018).

Furthermore, effective communication is a key personality trait on the part of a nurse leader. The nurse leader is the bridge between the medical specialists and patients as well as their families. The ultimate goal of the healthcare system, i.e., the well-being of patients and their families' satisfaction, can only be achieved by strong communication skills. In this regard, the sole responsibility lies on the shoulders of the nurse leader, so they must be equipped with strong communication skills (Cummings et al., 2020). Similarly, nurse leaders must be able to handle conflict resolution efficiently. In all organizations, including the healthcare system, conflicts are inevitable. Conflict resolution is the crucial personality trait of a nurse leader, which allows nurse leaders to resolve problems, improve productive teamwork, and gain patient satisfaction, so the leader should be able to handle the conflict situation timely.

Conclusion

Interprofessional communication is critical for nursing leadership and providing better quality services for the residents of the Assisted Living Facility (ALF). Interprofessional communication relies on celebrating diversity and provides patient-centric treatment and services. Nursing professionals require a higher level of coordination and trust among the workforce to cater to the needs of patients and residents in the case of ALF. U.S. labour force statistics also indicate the potential growth of job opportunities for professionals aiming for work in the ALF industry, and the potential for growth is relatively higher when compared to other industries. Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are also extremely useful in self-directed learning, coupled with a higher level of connectivity between various stakeholders in the service delivery process. Nonetheless, nursing professionals rely on interprofessional communication to create treatment and care plans that increase overall service delivery to the individual. Last but not least, the personal motivation behind interprofessional communication is the patient-centric approach to service delivery.

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