

# Concept of Nursing Care - Contributing to Societal Needs: A Therapeutic, Curative, Educative, Preventative and Rehabilitative Role in Healthcare and its Limitations

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## Abstract

Nursing has come a long way since the days of Florence Nightingale and even though no consensus exists it would seem reasonable to assume that caring still remains the inner core, the essence of nursing. In the light of the societal, contextual and political changes that have taken place during the 21st century, it is important to explore whether these might have influenced the essence of nursing.

**Keywords:** Nursing Care; Commitment; Conscience; Competence; Compassion; Confidence; Healthcare; Problems of Nurses.

## Introduction

The concept of nursing care involves aiding individuals in every type of medical difficulty or

emergency and providing practical assistance and psychological and emotional support when they are prevented from carrying out any essential task of everyday living through mental or physical illness, handicap, incapacity or injury.

### It Involves the Following Important Factors [1]:

Factors related to Nursing Care	Factors related to Nursing Care
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respect for fundamental human rights in the delivery of healthcare without prejudice</li> <li>• Rapid establishment of a helping relationship in order to provide reassurance to a patient and their families in order to establish an adapted and holistic plan of care</li> <li>• To ensure that the patient remains the central focus of the multidisciplinary team</li> <li>• The delivery of care with respect for the dignity and individuality of each and every patient</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ability to use the professional capabilities of each team member in order to deliver optimal care while acknowledging their limitations</li> <li>• Awareness and implementation of local and regional health care policies and laws that govern professional practice</li> <li>• Respect for the philosophy of care of the healthcare organization and working within their chosen framework of the nursing process</li> <li>• Identification of physical and psychological risks at all levels to patients and defense of their rights and their interests, ensuring safe working practices</li> </ul>

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- Respect for their right to accept or refuse care, or in the case of incapacity to make an informed decision
- The sacrosanct duty of professional confidence, respect for patient confidentiality and protection of their data
- The ability to work independently and also in collaboration with the multidisciplinary team in order to share skills, competencies and professional knowledge
- Participation in continuous professional development and areas of specialization, maintaining professional curiosity
- Use of care guidelines provided by the healthcare facility and evaluation of the research literature to propose evidence-based techniques
- Interpretation of and adherence to the codes of professional conduct relevant to a current work situation established by national and international regulatory nursing organizations
- Offering patients/clients adequate information appropriate to their level of understanding and language concerning their state of health or their illness, the investigations, prescribed curative or palliative treatments
- The provision of an appropriate level support from the relevant area of professional expertise to assist patients/ clients in making informed decisions about their care
- Effective teaching to encourage patients and their families, where relevant or desirable, to participate in their care
- Accurate verbal communication with other members of the interdisciplinary team and meticulous record keeping
- Self-motivation and encouraging an atmosphere of collegiality where the multidisciplinary team

Sister Simone Roach's 5C's of caring [2]—commitment, conscience, competence, compassion, and confidence—are highly applicable to the nursing profession. The benefits of doing so include better work relationships, improved patient relationships, and increased likelihood of career advancement.

### **Compassion**

Having compassion is essential for anyone in the health care profession as it takes compassion to give patients a positive experience. Compassionate nurses empathize with their patients and provide kind and considerate treatment at all times. In return, they may receive an inspiring sense of human connection and affirmation of the importance of their work.

### **Commitment**

The life of a nurse can be challenging at times, commitment to patients cannot be sacrificed. The act of committing yourself to work means going above and beyond normally expected behaviors and pledging to uphold strong values. Commitment to your career also involves continually improving one's knowledge and skills. Your education will improve your capabilities and enhance the level of care delivered to patients.

### **Competence**

There are a number of ways nurses can demonstrate competence in the workplace.

Consistently arriving to work on time and presenting yourself in a professional manner is one way. Another is to hold you to a high standard of excellence when fulfilling daily tasks, regardless of the behavior of others or the circumstances. It is also important to ask for help or clarification when there is uncertainty about a specific duty or method, rather than attempting to move forward if you are unsure.

### **Conscience**

Delivering the best possible care to patients involves a resilient sense of moral responsibility born of a strong conscience. Conscience helps guide your actions even when focus on stress or personal matters can challenge the consistent application of best practices. Adherence to your own conscience will always help to put you on the right course. The concept of working consistently on another's behalf, and "representing the concerns of the patient."

### **Confidence**

Confidence is the aspect of caring that ties the other 4 of the 5 C's together. It takes confidence in personal skills and knowledge to act with commitment, follow conscience, consistently act in a competent manner, and express compassion, even in the most difficult of situations. Confidence in experiences, education, and skills will ensure that nurses continually put their best foot forward. A confident nurse can help patients and family members deal with difficult news, and a strong sense of self will invoke positive change in patient care.

### Modern-day Nursing

which takes place within a healthcare system that is undergoing wide-reaching reforms due to huge economic restrictions worldwide [3] is under considerable pressure. Healthcare in the western world is facing significant challenges, for example changing patterns of disease, aging population, and numerous people living with chronic illnesses and long-term treatments, and a mobile healthcare workforce [4]. Such transformations are followed by a focus on efficiency and productivity characterized by a very short length of stay in hospitals, increased care intensity, fewer hospital beds and a reduction in human resources, particularly registered nurses [5]. The main reasons for this development can be traced back to advances in medical science and technology, including information technology, as well as an increase in the cost of healthcare. There is also a shortage of nurses and a high turnover rate. As nurses are on the frontline of patient care, the suggestion is that the outcome of these developments put nursing under pressure, since nursing takes time to perform. There are alarming reports that both patient safety and patient well-being seem to have been lost [6] and that essential care is left undone [7,8,9]. At present, we do not really know if this is because caring within nursing have actually adapted negatively to changing circumstances or if this is the result of an increased workload and, in many places in Europe, a sub-standard level of education.

The importance of having well-educated nurses (at undergraduate and post-graduate level) is supported in a study by Aiken et al [9]. Which indicated that staffing hospital surgical wards with nurses with a degree and not making them care for more than six patients at a time, would lead to a significant reduction in preventable hospital deaths. It would be strange if nursing, and thus caring, were to remain in a vacuum and not be influenced by the pressure of 21st century economic, societal, political and contextual currents that demand large-scale change. Taking the above-mentioned developments into account it would appear realistic to ask what the core of contemporary nursing is, and how do nurses, as a group, perceive caring. The fact that this issue was under examination from the 1970s through to the 1990s makes these questions particularly pertinent. Scientific literature from this period contains descriptions of caring in nursing whereas contemporary literature, especially in the context of coronary care, is very sparse with regard to descriptions of caring in nursing and the few that do contain descriptions rarely do so from the perspectives of the nurses.

*Indian Hospitals:* In the context of Health for all Establishment of hospitals and other institutions providing mostly curative services represents an interesting facet of various cultural, social, economic and political phases which we influenced the making of health services in India today. Historically, these services were developed to cater mostly to the needs of certain special strata of the population and because of this they are located in the urban areas. Hospitals of modern India act as the index of development both in scientific and technological sense of the term. Free healthcare treatment for all Indian citizens is the goal of Government of India by 2000 AD., and defined in the National Health Policy. It is a challenge which one has accepted at the time of independence. It still lies in a sorry condition. This situation is not a product of wrong planning, mismanagement or mishandling of certain sectors of health, but those are gross defects lying in almost all the sectors.

There are different types of hospitals. Whatever the hospital, irrespective of it, faces lot of problems and patient is the ultimate sufferer. So we need patient centered hospital.

*The following are the common problems that are identified in the hospitals:*

- Ineffective leadership
- Political interference
- Lack of information system regarding hospital services
- Lack of forward planning
- Lack of delegation and decentralization of authority
- Lack of clarity in duties and responsibilities
- Lack of disciplinary actions
- Lack of decision making at all levels
- Ineffective communication
- Primitive health information systems
- Lack of co-ordination
- Poor physical conditions and inadequate infrastructural facilities
- Improper record system and poor maintenance of records.
- Inadequate high technology equipment
- Negligence-deterioration in the standards of health care
- Lack of emphasis on patient centered service
- Inadequate supply of drugs
- Lack of quality food supply

- Inadequate sanitary facilities
- Lack of in-service education for staff
- High cost of health care
- Non-courteous attitude of employees in the wards
- Indifference among the doctors and other categories of staff .

The above scanning of the problems reveals the concept of health services changed and the people expectations also changed a great deal. Thus, there is a wide-spread belief that better management of health services is essential if higher standards of health care are to be achieved. Advances in technology, economic, political pressures and consumer demands add complexity and problems to hospital management at the rate equal to or greater than the rate at which managers solve them.

**The following specific examples were the problems and issues that were collected, observed and identified in many hospitals:**

1. Lack of Co-ordination
2. Non-attendance
3. Lack of values
4. Irresponsibility
5. Lack of clear Communication
6. Negligence
7. Lack of Attention
8. Fail to Screen
9. Lack of high technological facilities
10. Non-availability of specialist
11. Lack Attention
12. Wrong Diagnostic Procedures
13. High Cost

The drastic changes in new healthcare environment are needed for a continuous survival of the hospital system. One has to give utmost importance to patient. Every hospital has to come up with new and innovative ways to decrease their costs while continuing to provide a high quality of care and strong patient-orientation. One has to incorporate patient satisfaction, patient-focused and continuous quality improvement philosophy throughout the organization. In this competitive environment, the traditional concept of managing hospital services will not serve the purpose. There is need of structural transformation. It is in this context there is every need to create a patient centered hospital on modern lines [10,11,12].

### **Condition of Nurses in India**

Nurses form the backbone of any medical services or patient care in the health sector. But in India, this important section of workers are highly exploited, with lack of respect and dignity at workplaces and more importantly paid extremely low salaries with lack of job security. It is in this context that nurses across the country should unite and confront the hospital management and the government on these issues.

Most of the nurses are forced to work beyond the mandatory 8 hrs working day, to more than 10 to 11 hrs. Apart from low wages, none of the nurses are given employment benefits like Provident Fund (PF) and gratuity. The nurses are not even given health coverage despite facing higher risk of infections.

### **They Demand**

- Trade Union rights for all the nurses.
- End the bond system. Stop confiscation of educational and experience certificates by the hospital management at the time of resignation.
- No to workplace harassment by doctors and the hospital management. All nurses should be treated with respect and dignity.
- Standardized Wages at-least according to the minimum wages fixed by the Government. Wages to be revised and adjusted to the cost of living, with mandatory yearly increments.
- 8 hr working day, overtime allowances, yearly leave and other social security benefits.
- Health coverage for all nurses to be borne by the hospital management.
- End the contract system in government hospitals. All nurses should be recruited on a permanent basis and remove all bureaucratic impediments in recruiting nurses in government run hospitals.<sup>13</sup>

### **Conclusion**

Health care is one of the most complex activities in which human beings engage. Hospitals are basically service organizations. The professional area of an organization is influenced by its user's satisfaction. Healthcare services make up a significant portion of national expenses, and thus it is essential that the nature and quality of services be explored. Patient satisfaction is one of the primary outcome variables when considering healthcare services. Patient satisfaction has become an important

performance indicator for the delivery of quality medical care services.

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