



SCHOOL OF NURSING

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NURSING SKILLS

INTRODUCTION

Nursing is a profession within the healthcare sector, which focuses on the care of individuals, families, and communities, so that they may attain and sustain optimum health. A person practices nursing when he/she initiates and performs nursing services to individuals, families, and communities in any health care setting. This practice might be individual, or in collaboration with another member of the healthcare team. As independent practitioners, nurses are primarily responsible for the promotion of health and prevention of illness. As members of the healthcare team, nurses collaborate with other health care providers for the curative, preventive, and rehabilitative aspects of care, restoration of health, alleviation of suffering, and when recovery is not possible, towards a peaceful death. Core concepts of nursing includes; client, environment, health, nursing and health patterns.

Definitions of Nursing

The word “nurse” originated from the Latin word “*nutrire*” meaning to suckle or “*nutrix*” meaning which means to nourish (Taylor, Lillis, & LeMone, 1997). A nurse as a person, or nursing as an art is defined based on the origin. The word nurse is used to describe a person who nourishes, fosters, assists, and protects the sick, injured, and aged people. A nurse is a person who cares for the firm, infirm, including the dying individuals, families or communities.

The unique function of a nurse is to care for the individuals sick or well in the performance of those activities contributing to health or its recovery or to a dignified death, that they would perform unaided if they have the necessary strength, will or knowledge to do so (Handerson, 1977).

Nursing includes promotion of health, prevention of illness, and care of the sick, the disabled as well as the dying person or persons of all ages, groups and families in all settings. Nursing entails autonomous or collaborative care, involving other members of the healthcare delivery system.

Nursing according to the American Nurses Association (ANA)

It is “the protection, promotion, and optimization of health and abilities, preventions of illness and injury, alleviation of suffering through diagnosis and treatment of human response, and advocacy in the care of individuals, families, communities, and populations” (ANA, 2003, p. 6).

Nursing according to the International Council of Nurses

Nursing encompasses autonomous and collaborative care of individuals of all ages, families, groups and communities, sick or well and in all settings. It includes promotion of health, prevention of illness, and care of the ill, disabled and dying people. Advocacy, promotion of a safe environment, research, participation in shaping health policy in patient and health system management, as well as education are also key nursing roles.

A Professional Nurse is a person who has completed the basic nursing program and is authorized by the appropriate regulatory authority to practice nursing in his/her country.

Introduction to Nursing History

No profession can be well understood unless it is illuminated by the light of history interpreted from the human understanding. Nursing like any other profession has a very broad history. Nursing is the major professional practice of nurse.

The word “nurse” originated from the Latin word “*nutrire*” meaning to suckle or “*nutrix*” meaning which means to nourish. There is long history of nursing traced by several authors. While some traced the history of nursing in the area of roles performed by nurses, some discussed the history in the perspective of the political and social events that have shaped the evolution of the nursing profession. Brooks & Kleine-Kracht (1983) identified nine eras that helped in shaping the evolution of nursing through political and social events that took place between the 18th and 19th centuries. Berman, Snyder, Kozier, and Erb (2008) traced the history of nursing in relation to events that have influenced the development of nursing through the roles played by women, social attitudes, religions, war, as well as leadership.

Another aspect of nursing history is the division of the development of nursing into four periods namely: Intuitive, Apprentice, Educative, and Contemporary periods by Buenavista, Jr.

Furthermore, Tomey and Alligood (2002), divided the history of professional nursing into curriculum era, research era, graduate education era, and the theory era.

The late 16th century was the period within which nursing attain its modern meaning of a person who cares for the infirm, and until the 20th century before nursing became a secular profession.

In 1873, the Bellevue Hospital School of Nursing, of New York City, was founded. It was the first school of nursing in the United States to be founded on the principles of nursing established by Florence Nightingale. The school operated at Bellevue Hospital until its closure in **1969**.

History of Florence Nightingale

Florence Nightingale is referred as the mother or founder of modern nursing. She was born in Italy in 1810 in a wealthy British family. She later moved to London. Nightingale, was well-educated, and decided to be a nurse because earlier on, she knew her calling was caring for the sick. Florence Nightingale begins her training as a nurse at the Institute of St. Vincent de Paul at Alexandria, Egypt in the year **1850**. Her immense contributions towards the development of nursing cannot be over emphasized. She first gained fame by leading a team of 38 nurses to an overseas hospital of the British army during the Crimean War. Florence and her nurses greatly improved the conditions of soldiers, and many survived. She earned the name “The **Lady with the Lamp**” because she would visit soldiers at night with a small lantern in her hand. Florence Nightingale never really recovered from the physical strain of the Crimean War. She died on 13th August 1910 after a long 30 years period of suffering from syphilis.

Why nursing skills to Medical Practitioners

Nursing practice is an important and integral part of the healthcare system. Encyclopedic preparation of the medical practitioner is vital in order to keep up with the compound and evolutionary nature of the healthcare service delivery system. Nursing skills will help the medical practitioners to expand their knowledge and thereby familiarize themselves with a major part of the healthcare service delivery system. Knowledge acquired through nursing skills will help the medical practitioners to know how to relate with the client/patient as well as other members of the healthcare team, thereby creating a work friendly environment. Therefore, the medical practitioner must have adequate nursing skills in order to work effectively as a healthcare provider at all level of service delivery.

The medical practitioner will explore nursing skills in the following area:

Clinical: as a clinician, the medical practitioner applies nursing skills in providing healthcare service to the individuals, families, and communities. The core values of nursing which include health promotion and illness prevention are highly considered. Nursing skills acquired in gathering of data such as history taking, and physical examination as well as other methods of gathering patient data, are explored. Likewise, application of nursing process which includes Assessment, Nursing Diagnoses, Planning, Implementation of nursing actions, and Evaluation is very necessary in clinical service delivery. Nursing skills acquired in procedures such as taking of vital signs, drug administration, In-patient management as well as emergency nursing care, will help the medical practitioner to effectively manage cases at the all levels.

Education: as an educator, the medical practitioner utilizes the knowledge of health education learnt through nursing, to facilitate clients learning. The medical practitioner may serve as a consultant to individuals, families, groups and communities. Formal or informal ways can be used to share information with clients. The teaching of self-care concept, health promotion and techniques for preventing illness through positive health behavior are thought through health education.

Leadership: as leader, the medical practitioner will implore leadership skills learnt through nursing education to direct, persuade or influence others to effect positive change in healthcare delivery. A good leader must have the following characteristics:

- Good communication skills
- Good personality
- Good teaching ability
- Good learner
- Good mentoring ability
- Good role model for others
- Accountable
- Good problem-solving ability

- Good team worker
- Goal oriented
- Open-minded
- Good time manager
- Patient
- Knowledgeable in his/her area of specialization

Advocacy: The rise in demand for user-empowerment and public accountability for service has increase the need for advocacy. There are two major goals in client advocacy:

- To help clients find out what services are available, what services are they entitled to, and how they can acquire those services.
- To help in influencing change and make sure the system of service delivery is relevant to client's needs.

Characteristics of a good advocate are as follows:

- Must have good communication skills
- Must be willing to take risk
- Must be assertive
- Must have the ability to identify resources and obtain results

Models of advocacy are as follows:

Advocate as guardian of patient's rights: the nurse must inform the patients of their right and support them in exercising those rights.

Advocate to conserve patient's best interest: the patient must be assisted in making decisions that are in his/her best interest. For instance; persuading a patient to continue treatment of a terminal illness because there are some chances of survival.

Advocate as protector of patient's autonomy: two major tasks of the nurse in this are information, and support. The patient should be provided with sufficient information for making an informed decision about healthcare. The patient should be supported by upholding his/her decision.

Advocate for social justice: this involves advocacy for social and political change to deal with inequalities and inequities in healthcare service delivery at all levels.

Collaboration: collaborates with clients, and other members of the healthcare team to ensure good healthcare service delivery.

Management: as a manager, the nurse oversees client/patient care, supervises ancillary staff, manages the clinics and participates in healthcare system projects. In this case the utilization of

certain steps of management process is very important. These steps include: planning, organization, leading and control, evaluation.

Research: participates in health research through systematic investigation, data gathering and analysis, so as to enhance and promote healthcare service delivery at all level is an important role of the nurse.

PROVIDER CLIENT RELATIONSHIP AND PROFESSIONALISM

Ethical Considerations in Patient Care

Objective: At the end of the lesson, the student should understand the professional conduct in nursing ethical considerations in patient care.

Terminologies

Nursing:

- An art of assisting an individual sick or well in performance of those activities contributing to health or its recovery or peaceful death that he/she would perform unaided if she/he had the necessary strength, will and knowledge. (Virginia Henderson, 1996).
- It also means to nurture or nourish.
- Use of clinical judgment in provision of care to enable people improve, maintain or recover health, to cope with health problems and to achieve the best quality of life, whatever their disease or disability until death. (Royal College of Nursing, 2003).

Profession:

- An occupational group with a set of attitudes, behaviors or both. It requires advanced specialized training and must meet specified needs.
- The body of people in a learned occupation, community of scholars, occupational group, job, work, business or line of work.

Professional Nurse:

A person, who has successfully undergone a prescribed nursing training program, passed a licensing examination and has been registered by the regulatory body. In Kenya, Nursing Council of Kenya (N.C.K) is the one mandated to register nurses.

Ethics:

- Derived from the Greek word “ethos” meaning customs, convention or the spirit of a community.
- Also known as morals.
- Can also be defined as the discipline that deals with the rightness or wrongness of actions.

Code of Ethics:

- It's a formal statement of the ideals and values of group.
- A written list of a profession's values and standard of conduct.

As earlier noted, ethics is a discipline (field of study, branch of knowledge that deals with rightness and wrongness of actions. The goal of ethics is similar to that of the legal system except in most cases there is no system of enforcement or ethical guideline. Ideally, the ethical system is more inclusive and usually exceeds the legal system in the situations it covers. In reality, there can be and are laws that are unethical.

In health care concerns, law and ethics overlap in many areas. These areas such as issues on death, dying, birth, abortion, genetics, quality of life, breach of right, allocation of medical services, and violations of others' rights.

Most of the ethical considerations are similar in health-related professions especially where patient care is concerned.

Purposes of Nursing Ethics

Nursing Code of Ethics has the following purposes:

- a) Inform the public about the minimum standards of the profession and help them understand professional nursing conduct.
- b) Provide a sign of the profession's commitment to the public it serves.
- c) Outline the major ethical considerations of the profession.
- d) Provide ethical standards for professional behavior.
- e) Guide the profession in self-regulation.
- f) Remind nurses of the special responsibility they assume when caring for the sick.

There are several different codes of ethics that nurses may adopt. In Kenya ICN and N.C.K, ANA Canadian Nurses Association (CNA)

International council of Nurses code for nurses' ethical concepts applied to nursing (2000)

This code of ethics stipulates that:

- Nurses have four fundamental responsibilities: to promote health, to prevent illness, to restore health and to alleviate suffering. The need for nursing is universal.
- Inherent in nursing is respect for human rights, including the right to life, to dignity and to be treated with respect.
- Nursing care is unrestricted by considerations of age, color, creed, culture, disability or illness, gender, nationality, politics, race or social status.

- Nurses render health services to the individual, the family and the community and coordinate their services with those of related groups.

Nurses and People

- The nurse's primary responsibility is to people requiring nursing care.
- In providing care, the nurse promotes an environment in which the human rights, values, customs and spiritual beliefs of the individual, family and community are respected.
- The nurse ensures that the individual receives sufficient information on which to base consent for care and related treatment.
- The nurse holds in confidence personal information and uses judgment in sharing this information.
- The nurse shares with society the responsibility for initiating and supporting action to meet the health and social needs of the public, in particular those of vulnerable populations.
- The nurse also shares responsibility to sustain and protect the natural environment from depletion, pollution, degradation and destruction.

Nurses and Practice

- The nurse carries personal responsibility and accountability for nursing practice and for maintaining competence by continual learning.
- The nurse maintains a standard of personal health such that the ability to provide care is not compromised.
- The nurse uses judgment regarding individual competence when accepting and delegating responsibilities.
- The nurse at all times maintains standards of personal conduct which reflect well on the profession and enhance public confidence.
- The nurse, in providing care, ensures that use of technology and scientific advances are compatible with the safety, dignity and rights of people.

Nurses and the Profession

- The nurse assumes the major role in determining and implementing acceptable standards of clinical nursing practice, management, research and education.
- The nurse is active in developing a core of research-based professional knowledge.

- The nurse, acting through the professional organization, participates in creating and maintaining equitable social and economic working conditions in nursing.

Nurses and Co-workers

- The nurse sustains a cooperative relationship with co-workers in nursing and other fields.
- The nurse takes appropriate action to safeguard individuals when their care is endangered by a co-worker or any other person.

Nurses and the Profession

- The nurse plays the major role in determining and implementing desirable standards of nursing practice and nursing education.
- The nurse is active in developing a core of professional knowledge.
- The nurse, acting through the professional organization, participates in establishing and maintaining equitable social and economic working conditions in nursing.

Common ethical principles

Ethical principles are tenets that direct or govern actions. By applying ethical principles, nurses and other health professionals become more systematic in solving ethical conflicts. Ethical principles can be used as guidelines in analyzing dilemmas and in validation of moral claims.

1. Autonomy

This word is derived from the Greek words *autos* (“self”) and *nomos* (“rule” or “law”), and therefore refers to self-rule. Autonomy entails the ability to make a choice free from external constraints. Personal autonomy implies that one has personal rules of the self that is free from both controlling interferences that prevent meaningful choice e.g. inadequate understanding. The dignity of every human allows the competent individual to make personal choices regarding medical treatment. An individual without decision-making capacity, for instance the critically ill or a mentally retarded person also has the right of choice exercised by a surrogate or designated proxy (legal guardian). Decision is made in the best interest of the patient.

2. Beneficence

Beneficence is the duty to do good and the active promotion of benevolent acts (e.g. **goodness, kindness, charity**). It may also include the injunction not to inflict harm. There are two elements of beneficence: providing benefit and balancing benefits and harms. One undesirable outcome of beneficence is paternalism - situations whereby health care providers decide what they feel is good for clients and try to coerce them to accept it.

3. Paternalism

Paternalism is the intentional limitation of another's autonomy, justified by an appeal for the welfare or needs of another. Under this principle, the prevention of evils or harm takes precedence over any potential evils caused by interference with the individual's autonomy or liberty.

4. Veracity

Veracity is the obligation to tell the truth and not to lie or deceive others. It forms the basis of trusting relationship between nurses and clients. Deception can be intentional lying, failure to disclose or partial disclosure of information.

5. Confidentiality

Confidentiality relates to the concept of privacy. Information obtained from an individual will not be disclosed to another unless the client has given permission, it will benefit the person or there is a direct threat to the social good.

For instance if: there is a "duty to warn" if there is a danger of significant harm to themselves or others e.g. Gunshot wounds and suspected child abuse have mandatory reporting requirements. Communicable diseases such as tuberculosis or smallpox must be reported to the public health authorities.

If a patient becomes unfit to drive and the practitioner is aware that patient continues to drive
"The privilege ends where public peril begins"

6. Fidelity

Fidelity is promise keeping; the duty to be faithful to one's commitments. It includes promises made to another person. Fidelity implies the nurse's obligation to be faithful to commitments made to self & others. It includes the professional's faithfulness or loyalty to agreements & responsibilities accepted as part of the practice of the profession. It is the basis of accountability as Individuals are held responsible for their own actions to themselves and to their colleagues.

7. Justice

Justice states that like cases should be treated alike. A more restricted version of justice is *distributive justice*, which is concerned with the distribution of punishment. It refers to the distribution of social benefits and burdens based on various criteria to include: Equality, Individual need and effort, societal contribution, Individual merit and Legal entitlement. In the critical care unit and in renal and nephrology nursing there can be an ethical dilemma in the principle of justice.

8. Non- maleficence

This is the duty not to inflict harm as well as to prevent and remove harm (both actual harm and risk of harm). It may be included within the principle of beneficence, in which case non-maleficence would be more binding. This principle helps guide decision about treatment approaches. The treatment must offer reasonable prospects of benefits and must not be too expensive or very painful.