

Neonatal Nursing- Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

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Introduction

As hospital acuity continues to rise, so does the need for inpatient health care providers. More health care providers are required to manage the increasing complexity of inpatients. Neonatal nurses now a day's serves a variety of roles, from teaching in various setting to rendering hands-on care in hospitals or clinic. Taking care of children involves self-awareness that one must be patient enough about kids as well as consider the fundamentals of child psychology especially the developmental stages. Since children could not sometimes utter what they really felt whenever they are sick, careful assessment and an experienced "clinical eye" must be employed. The American Nurses Association (ANA) states nursing is the protection, promotion, and optimization of health and abilities, prevention of illness and injury, alleviation of suffering through the diagnosis and treatment of human response, and advocacy in the care of individuals, families, communities, and populations [1-5].

The unique function of the nurse is to assist the individual, sick or well, in the performance of those activities contributing to health or its recovery (or to peaceful death) that he would perform unaided if he had the necessary strength, will or knowledge. (Virginia Avenel Henderson). "Nursing...its very essence lies in the creative imagination, the sensitive spirit, and the intelligent understanding that provides the very foundation for effective nursing care". Donahue Nightingale identified nursing as a scientific discipline separate from medicine. It has educational foundation and basic college credit in scientific disciplines related to nursing. Pediatric nursing or child health nursing is the specialty nursing which deals with care of babies, children and adolescents. A nurse who specializes in this area is usually referred to as a pediatric nurse [5-7].

Materials and Methods

Systematic analysis of the articles was done.

Trends in pediatric nursing

Current trends in pediatric nursing are: Family centered Care, High technology care, Evidence based practice, Primary nursing, Case Management, A traumatic care, Child oriented environment practice, Cost containment, Nursing process application, Ethics in Pediatric nursing [8].

Neonatal nursing yesterday

Typical work activities that the neonatal nurses were doing may vary, but they may include: Assessing, observing and reporting on the condition of neonates; Preparing pediatric patients for operations and procedures; Recording pulse, temperature and respiration and keeping accurate records of these observations; Setting up drips and blood

transfusions; Maintaining and checking intravenous infusions; Administering drugs and injections; Assisting with tests and evaluations; Responding quickly to emergencies; Explaining treatment and procedures to enable parents/guardians to consent to treatment; Supporting, advising and educating patients and close relatives; Observing strict hygiene and safety rules and ensuring that visitors also observe any rules on the ward or unit; Writing reports and updating records before completing a shift.

Neonatal nursing today

Today neonatal nurses should be trained to meet the growing demand of the health care industry. The question is: How should neonatal nurses be educated? Therefore there is a need to train the nurses in the area of pediatric nursing especially neonatal nursing that can be done by the leaders in this field. There is a need for master's (pediatric nursing) prepared nurses as clinicians, managers, administrators, and instructors. Doctoral-prepared are needed as leaders in all specialty areas, including education and research. The Canadian Pediatric Society strongly supports the development and implementation of advanced practice nursing roles at the master's level for the provision of neonatal health care. A viable program of advanced nursing practice requires careful consideration and planning to provide the necessary environment for success.

Today pediatric nurse has a variety of roles. These roles are beyond the traditional boundaries of nursing. Today pediatric nurses are involved and performing a great job independently, and /or with the collaboration of pediatrician. The care given by the pediatric nurse is greatly admired by the children, parents and relatives. This is because of the 24 hours availability of the pediatric nurses and ready to care approach implemented by them. Today's roles can be categorized into extended and expanded roles along with the traditional roles performed by them. Some of the roles overlap but these roles are really challenging. Skills of a Pediatric Nurse are assessment, Communication, Safety Risks, Learning the Right Approach, Communicating Well, Working Under Pressure, Ready for Unhappy endings. The roles of pediatric nurse can be categorized into extended and expanded roles. Extended role of a Pediatric nurse is the responsibility assumed by a nurse beyond the traditional role. It is the scope of nursing services outside the hospital. Expanded role of nursing means enlargement of nurse role within the boundaries of nursing. Expanded role of nursing is the responsibility assumed by a nurse within field of practice autonomy. Kate and Francine stated that advanced practice roles in nursing originated from US in late 1960s as a response to the doctors shortage. Subsequently to that, more recent roles have stretched rapidly. A 1994 survey of Canadian neonatal programs indicated that out of 20 level III units, eight were using Nurse Practitioners and an additional four planned to hire such individuals (unpublished data). Advanced nurse practitioner may

provide care in level I, II and/or III nurseries. Several studies have addressed the quality of neonatal care provided by Advanced nurse practitioner and have found no significant differences between the care provided by medical residents and APNs in terms of mortality, complications, length of stay and cost of care. Other reported benefits of advanced practice nursing roles include equivalent or enhanced levels of parent satisfaction and the ability to communicate information. Expanded role of pediatric nurse include Advanced Practice nurse, Clinical nurse specialist, Nurse anesthetist, Primary care giver, Pediatric Nurse Practitioner, Nurse administrator, Nurse researcher, Health Educator, Coordinator and Collaborator, Nurse Advocate, Nurse Consultant, Case Manager, Recreationist, Social Worker, Counselor, Leader. Extended role of pediatric nurse include Primary care giver, Case Manager, Parish Nursing, Nurse Advocate, Counselor, Communicator, Collaborator, Educator, School health nurse, Public health nurse, Pediatric home care nurse, Hospice nurse, Rehabilitation nurse, Infection control nurse. Nurses have now begun to recognize the need to develop their role as clinical leaders, although they have been slow to do so when compared with their medical colleagues (Berragan), Reasons for this could include a lack of suitable role models or the current clinical grading pay structure, which keeps clinical nurses at the bedside while allowing less clinically motivated nurses to move into management or education (Buckingham).

World Health Organization's Expert Committee on Nursing Practice states: 'Because of their in-depth knowledge and experience, they (nurses) have much to offer in the areas of health-care assessment and policy development.' According to a retrospective review of the NP's role development in the evolution of the EDEDU (Emergency Department Extended Care Unit) by Silvestri, McDaniel-Yakscoe, et al., incorporation of the NP(nurse practitioner) in the treatment team has provided efficient use of professional staff, comprehensive patient care, and increased patient satisfaction. They concluded that the use of the EDECU (Emergency Department Extended Care Unit) has become an important part of the services offered in the ED (emergency departments) at "The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia". The integration of the NP in a pivotal role allows for optimal use of human resources, and provides efficient, cost-effective patient care in the ED. According to the Committee of the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare Report, 1971 whose purpose was to study extended roles for nurses and to evaluate feasibility of expanding nursing practice. Significant findings were: Extending the scope of the nurse's role was essential to provide equal access to health care for all consumers, Need to establish innovative curricular designs in health science centers with increased financial support for nursing education, Need to advocate for commonality of nursing licensure and certification, including a model nursing practice law suitable for national application, Need for research related to cost-benefit analyses and attitudinal surveys to assess impact of new role [9].

Neonatal nursing tomorrow

Neonatal nurses can work and are working at their best for the pediatric population. There will be more roles that they will be serving in future. In the developed countries neonatal nurses are performing these roles but because of lack of prominent leaders in this field, in developing countries these roles are lacking. Some of the roles are; Nurse entrepreneur, Tele nurse, Forensic nurse, Peace Corps nurse, independent neonatal nurse practitioner and independent neonatal nurse consultant [10].

Conclusion

Neonatal nurses are highly skilled health care providers who are equipped to fill the void on inpatient hospital teams and often fill roles that are considered "hospitalist" positions. Neonatal Nursing is a challenging and rewarding career. Nurses who specialize in neonatal nursing commit their skills and knowledge to care for neonates and their families. This rewarding opportunity is fast-paced, challenging, as well as heart breaking at times. A neonatal registered nurse provides preventive care as well as care for immediate illness and can work in various settings as they focus on one segment of the population.

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