

Missed Nursing Care

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Abstract

Missed nursing care is a subset of the category known as error of omission. It means that the needed nursing care that is delayed, partially done, or not finished at all. Missed nursing care is a matter of concern because nurses coordinate, provide, and evaluate many interventions as a part of health team towards treatment of patient illness. Moreover, a nurse also plans, implement, and evaluate nurse-directed care to manage patient's clinical manifestations and responses to care, and to promote health and healing. Thus missed nursing care is not only a type of Medical error that may affect safety and prognosis, but has contributed to be a unique type of Medical underuse.

Keywords: Missed nursing care, Patient prognosis, Donabedian's structure process outcome.

Introduction

"When you are a nurse, you know that every day you will touch a life or a life will touch yours"

This famous quote emphasizes on the Nurses-roles and responsibilities towards human beings. Nurses are the first observer of either improvement or deterioration in patient condition. Nurses also are the premier one to identify the signs of complication or deterioration in patient's health and first in caring and comforting the patient. With that nurses also have to carry out the needed intervention of the doctors as a part of the health

team for the improvement in patient outcome.

So it clearly underlines the importance of nurses in early improvement of patient condition and complexity of the work nurses have to carry in his/her duty hours. But think of that, if nurses forgets or are unable to provide the needed care in time or do not document the early signs of complication or deliberately skips some aspects of patient care due to overburdened work then it will really pose a bad impact on patient's favorable outcome directly or indirectly and can lead to short term or long term consequences.

The term for this negligence is missed nursing care.

Definition

*Missed nursing care refers to needed nursing care that is delayed, partially completed, or not completed at all.*¹

-AHRQ

Missed nursing care is an error of omission. The patient safety movement has identified two major types of errors – acts of commission (such as marking the incorrect eye for surgery) and acts of omission (such as not ambulating the patient).²

Missed nursing care falls in the category of errors of omission. Missed nursing care is defined as any aspect of required patient care that is omitted (either in parts or in whole) or delayed.

-NCBI

Missed nursing care is a matter of concern because nurses are a common person to carry out not only doctor's orders but also have to deliver their own nursing care. So any nursing care missed or skipped can ultimately affect patient prognosis.

Causes

According to Donabedian's structure process outcome, have developed a conceptual model of missed nursing care.

According to him causes of missed nursing care are:

- Inadequate staffing
- Competency level
- Education & experience
- Material resources (medication, supplies, equipment)
- Teamwork
- Communication

Donabedian's feel that if one or more of these resources is missing during nurses work period, then nurse's needs to prioritize their activities and the stage is set for nursing care to be delayed or omitted.^{1,4,5}

Consequences

Ultimately affects Patient favorable prognosis

Others

- ✓ Delayed or omitted medications
- ✓ Complications like pressure ulcers, falls, VAP, nosocomial infections, decrease in

patient satisfaction.

Prevention:

- Adequate staffing
- Adequate supply chain
- Communication
- In-service education
- Shift of nursing role from case method to team or modular nursing.
- Nurses willingness

1. Adequate staffing

It's a universal problem of all hospital, recruiting nurses not according to nurse patient ratio.

Ideally the nurse patient ratio must be-

- ICU- 1:1
- Wards- 1:3 or 1:5

If this ratio is followed then it can solve lots of problems of nurses as it will help them in providing effective quality nursing care as they will not be burdened with loads of patient and its care.³

2. Adequate chain supply

A well organized, reliable supply chain for medications, clinical supplies and equipment may contribute to nursing capacity to complete all required care in time with quality.

3. Communication

Effective two way communication between nurses and also with other members of health team can solve many minute to bigger problems. Good communication can prevent confusions; doubt and also guidance can be obtained to deal with issues and delegation of work can be done in case of busy hours instead of skipping or missing the work.

4. In service education

CNE, Induction programmes and various other teachings must be directed towards the issue of Missed nursing care aspects like causes, prevention, consequences etc so that nurses can be sensitized and also can be educated and equipped through such education to deal with such errors.

5. Shift of nursing role from case method to team nursing

Case method is one which loads the nurse with whole lots of responsibilities right from simple daily procedures to medication to complete patient care without much anyone's help and this makes it liable for the nurses to get burdened and which will be resulting in skipping of some or other required care. And if nurses were appointed with many patients then scenario will be worsen.

Team nursing is a good concept of '*care through others*' and its devised to improve patient satisfaction.

In this, the team consists of up to 4 to 6 members that have a team leader who gives jobs and instructions to the group. Team nursing is designed to accommodate professional and non professionals working together to identify, plan, implement, and evaluate comprehensive client center care. I feel this approach can really solve the problem of missed nursing care.^{6,7}

Above mentioned points are crucial in preventing missed nursing care, but if there is less or no introspection and will of a nurse to give quality care or avoiding certain aspects of daily care being missed, and then every blame is on him/her.

Lastly I feel nurse's role is vital in patient well being and safety. Patient comes with problems and it's our duty to relieve them with happiness and free them from their problems without any unnecessary prolonged stay. But error of missed nursing care may or may not cause big setback to patient at once but it will surely affect the patient prognosis and outcome in some or the other way.

Would like to conclude with a quote-

If I can't do anything good for others then I even don't have any right to do harm to others.

Conclusion

Missed nursing care can have adverse consequences for the patients, nurses, and organizations. Therefore, it is necessary to adopt strategies such as adequate staffing, adequate chain supply, good communication and increasing nurses'

job satisfaction to reduce the amount of missed nursing care. Further studies are needed to explain the predictors of the missed nursing care consequences.⁸

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