



A STUDY TO ASSESS THE KNOWLEDGE OF NURSES REGARDING ROLE OF NURSE IN PATIENT'S ADVOCACY AMONG REGISTERED NURSES OF INDIRA GANDHI MEDICAL COLLEGE (I.G.M.C) AND HOSPITAL, SHIMLA

Jyoti Kumari

M.Sc(N)

(Sister Nivedita Government Nursing college, IGMC, Shimla.)

ABSTRACT

Background: Patient advocacy is described as “Nursing activities aimed at securing patient’s legal and ethical rights and satisfying their existential needs, both on the level of the patient- nurse relationship and in the health care team or organization”. Nurse as a patient’s advocate helps patients communicate with other health care providers so they get all the information which they need to make decisions about their health care. Nurses play a key role in patient health care. So self instructional module was developed and administered to improve the knowledge of nurses regarding role of nurse in patient’s advocacy.

Aim: The study was conducted with an objective to assess the knowledge of nurses regarding role of nurse in patient’s advocacy among registered nurses

Methodology: A study was conducted in May 2019 in I.G.M.C and Hospital, Shimla. 60 registered nurses were selected from various departments of Indira Gandhi Medical College and Hospital, Shimla. Self instructional module (SIM) regarding role of nurse in patient advocacy was provided to experimental group. Data was collected by self designed questionnaire related to patient advocacy. The gathered data was analyzed to determine knowledge score.

Results: The study findings revealed that more than half respondents (25%) had poor knowledge score, 75% had average knowledge, and none of the sample had good knowledge score regarding role of nurse in patient’s advocacy.



Conclusion: Since the study showed that maximum registered nurses had average knowledge regarding role of nurses in patient's advocacy so there is a need to enhance the knowledge of nurses regarding their role in patient's advocacy.

Keywords: Nurse, patient advocacy, knowledge.

INTRODUCTION

Patient advocacy is an area of specialization in health care concerned with advocacy for patients, survivors and caregivers. The activities in patient advocacy involves: patient rights, matters of privacy, confidentiality or informed consent, patient representation, awareness building, support and education of patients. The nurses primary roles of promoting health, preventing illness, restoring health and alleviating suffering places the nurse in a position to always remain an advocate for their patients. Patient advocacy is described as "nursing activities aimed at securing patient's legal and ethical rights and satisfying their existential needs, both on the level of the patient- nurse relationship and in the health care team or organization." (Vaartio-Rajalin, Leino-Kilpi, 2011).

Nowadays, global healthcare systems started to become more complex, and as the role of the cost of care continue placing more burdens on patients, a new profession of private professional advocacy began to take root in the mid-2000s. Nurses are highly skilled and trained professionals who take care of the sick. They educate patients, families, communities and populations on wellness and healthy living as well as health approaches to any chronic or current disease process and treatment.¹

The nature and duties of nurses depict them as health care providers as they are closest to patients and their families. Nurses are better placed as advocates of patients because they are constantly interacting with patients, thus making it easy for patients to trust them and confide in them. So the nurse as patient advocate should stand for the patient's rights, dignity and health whenever required, thus is becoming the communicator between the physician and patient²



Lois Gerber (2018) has published an article related to Understanding the nurse's role as patient advocate. He has explained about the four steps of advocacy. First is the assessment of needs, which focuses on the patient, situation, setting, risks, and available healthcare resources. The second step is identifying the patients' specific goals. The third step is implementing the advocacy plan. In the fourth step, nurse advocates evaluate the outcome of their advocacy behaviours. Thus, advocacy is proactive behaviour that improves or corrects a situation, rather than a report of something that's gone wrong.³

Kunal Shah and Sunil Garg (2011) conducted a research study on Patient advocacy groups: Need and opportunity in India. Study concluded that with an increasing number of corporate hospitals, healthcare related issues, research trials and undue attention by media in India, there is a need to focus more on patient's rights and protection.⁴ As the bedside caregiver nurse spends much time with a patient as compare to other medical personnel, so a nurse is specifically positioned to be an advocate. Patient advocacy is also one of the ethical expectations for nurses. One of the basic aspect of nursing advocacy is the patient's right to make decisions that affect their health. The nurse can support alert, competent patients who refuse their medications or choose not to have a particular medical treatment and nurse can also provide information that helps a patient to make decisions related to his/ her health.⁵

In Indian scenario, patients has less knowledge regarding their disease, treatment and importance of the continuation of treatment or about the various health policies from which they can take benefits and even patients also hesitates to share their emotions as well. At present, nurse is the medical personnel, who communicate most of the time with patients, so nurse's discussion with patients can resolve their conflicts. But nowadays, due to workload sometime there is ineffective communication between patient and nurses, thus increases the conflicts in patient's mind regarding his/her health and treatment. To overcome this gap nurses must be aware about their role as patient advocate.



OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the prior knowledge of nurses regarding role of nurse in patient's advocacy among registered nurses of Indira Gandhi Medical College (I.G.M.C.) and Hospital, Shimla.
2. To find the association of level of knowledge of nurses with selected demographic variables regarding role of nurse in patient's advocacy among registered nurses Indira Gandhi Medical College (I.G.M.C.) and Hospital, Shimla.

METHODOLOGY

In this study descriptive research design were used to collect the data from the sample size of 60 adults who were working in Indira Gandhi Medical College and Hospital, Shimla (Himachal Pradesh).

Convenience sampling technique was used to select the study sample and self-administered structured knowledge questionnaire was used to collect the data from registered nurses. The questionnaire comprised of two sections; section first had questions related to demographic variables (age, professional qualification ,clinical work experience, source of prior information, work area) while section two consisted of questions about knowledge regarding patient advocacy.

To ensure the content validity of the tool (structured questionnaire), it was submitted to thirteen experts (eleven nursing experts and two advocates). Reliability of the tool was computed by using Karl Pearson's Correlation Coefficient formula. The reliability of structured knowledge questionnaire was found to be 0.80. Since the normal range is 0.5- 0.9 so the tool was found to be reliable.

Ethical approval was taken from the ethical committee. Written informed consent was taken for the study sample regarding their willingness to participate in the research study and the purpose for carrying out research study was explained to the participants. Confidentiality of the information of the sample was maintained.



Data was analyzed by descriptive and inferential statistics i.e. frequency and percentage distribution, mean percentage, median and chi square to determine the association between knowledge with selected variables.

RESULT

Frequency and percentage distribution of registered nurses according to their demographic variables revealed that most (49%) of the adults were between the age group of 20-30 years, the most (53%) had professional qualification as G.N.M, majority (67%) has 0-5 years of clinical work experience and in area of work majority (83 %) were working in emergency/trauma ward and medicine wards.

TABLE 1

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of registered nurses as Per their Knowledge Score Regarding Role of Nurse in Patient’s Advocacy

N= 60

Level of knowledge score	Range of knowledge score	Frequency (%)
Good	21-30	0 (0)
Average	11-20	45 (75%)
Below average	0-10	15 (25%)

Maximum score: 30 ; Minimum score: 0

Table 1 reveals that the more than half respondents (75%) has average knowledge score, 25% had below average score.



TABLE 2

Association of knowledge scores and demographic variables of registered nurses

N=60

Demographic Variables		Association of KNOWLEDGE Score with Demographic variables (Pre KNOWLEDGE) Experimental Group						
Variables	Opts	Good	Average	Below Average	df	Chi test	Table Value	P Value
AGE IN YEARS	20-30 years		13	7	3	4.167	7.815	0.244
	30-40 years		7	1				
	40-50 years		1	-				
	Above 50 years		-	1				
PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION	G.N.M		14	2	2	8.333	5.991	0.016*
	P.B.BSc nursing		1	4				
	B.Sc nursing		6	3				
	M.Sc. nursing and above		-	-				
CLINICAL WORK EXPERIENC	0-5year		14	6	3	2.063	7.815	0.559
	5-10years		3	-				



E	10-15years		2	2				
	Above15 years		2	1				
SOURCE OF PRIOR INFORMATION	Print media		8	3	3	1.039	7.815	0.792
	Mass media		1	-				
	Both print and mass		6	4				
	Health Personnel		6	2				
WORK AREA	Emerg./Trauma ward		4	3	5	2.789	11.070	0.732
	HDU/SICU		2	1				
	Medicine ICU		4	-				
	Paediatric ward		3	2				
	Psychiatric ward		4	1				
	Superspec. ward		4	2				

$\chi^2=8.333$ *significant at $p\leq 0.05$

Association of knowledge score of registered nurses with selected demographic variables was computed by using inferential statistics i.e. Chi square which revealed that there is a significant association of knowledge score with Clinical



work experience of registered nurses of Indira Gandhi Medical College, Shimla (Himachal Pradesh).

CONCLUSION

The study was conducted to assess the knowledge of registered nurses regarding role of nurse in patient's advocacy. Study reveals that majority (75%) of sample had average knowledge score regarding role of nurse in patient's advocacy. Hence, the study findings concluded that there is a need to improve knowledge of nurses regarding their role as patient's advocate.

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