

Nursing cultural dilemma



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Abstract

Every aspect of life, including attitudes, beliefs, and values is influenced by one's culture. Behavior, including behavior affecting health is culturally determined. As the population of the United States continues to diversify, recognition of cultural differences and their impact on health care becomes more critical. Nurses provide health care to culturally diverse client populations in a variety of settings. Thus knowledge of culturally relevant information is essential for delivery of competent nursing care.

Literature Review

Each individual comes from a cultural background that, in some way, influences behavior and attitudes about health and illness. Personal attitudes and behaviors determine not only the ways that clients interpret health events and utilize health, but also the ways that nurses interpret events and provide health care. The central role that culture plays in determining perception compels health care providers to evaluate their personal views about health and illness before examining those of clients from other cultural groups. Nurses must be able to recognize that culture affects the health care needs of clients and respond appropriately.

According to an Australian hospital: “ a great proportion of nurses' problems when working with foreign patients is due to lack of knowledge regarding culturally determined ideas of health, illness, and insufficient adaptation of those patients to Australian culture and hospitals” (Wadensten, 2008). It is not only in Australia, it is a worldwide situation. Thus one way for nurse to

avoid such cultural dilemma is for them to try to have a good understanding of illness and what they mean to people.

It is stated in the International Council of Nursing specifies on its code of ethics for nurses 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 cultural rights, the right to life and choice, to dignity and to be treated with respect. Nursing care is respectful of and unrestricted by considerations of age, color, creed, culture, disability or illness, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, politics, race or social status. Nurses render health services to the individual, the family and the community and co-ordinate their services with those of related groups” (Dogan, 2008).

Health, illness, and disease do not have the same meaning to all patients. One may feel healthy regarding certain factors, another may feel ill. “ Illness and health statues are not concepts restricted by medical care; they are also social phenomena” (Klein, 2008). It is to show you, when dealing with cultural differences, health, illness, and disease can be both objective and subjective. One way to avoid cultural dilemma is to communicate. “ Effective communication, clear explanations, and respect for the right of the patient can reduce the rate of cultural dilemma” (Chater, 2007).

My purpose

My philosophy of life is my attitude toward the experience of living life, what I hold to be the meaning of life and what I believe should be achieved by me in order to achieve the most fulfilling life possible. An example of such a

philosophy is clearly exhibited in nursing. I strongly believe that in life, the way you treat someone is the way you will be treated. The same thing goes to nurses, the way they treat their patients, the same way they will be treated by their boss and coworkers. There is no better reward you can give yourself than treating someone with respect, love, and caring.

I chose this topic because I wanted to know what can be done to prevent cultural dilemma. It is something that nurses are experiencing in their profession in daily basis. As a result, they must continually reaffirm to ethical values. That way they can always remember the four Meta paradigm of nursing: human individual, environment, health, and nursing. Each of them represents the nurse's commitment to wellness. For instance, the human individual, it is to treat patients with respect, understand feelings, and especially respect to their cultural background. For it is the duty of all nurses to treat their patients accordingly.

Conclusion

After, I read all the articles I can conclude that cultural dilemma is an issue for healthcare providers not only in America, but everywhere you go.

Researchers have found that: " people from Germany believe that heart disease and cancer are bodily and spiritually causes. Spanish people living in Spain believe that these diseases occur only because of bodily reasons. They also do not like to talk about the illness and death because those are considered as taboo topics to them (Kuhn, 2009). They also believe that cancer is a punishment from God and nothing can cure it (Kuhn, 2009).

Nowadays, because of cultural beliefs patients have been refused to comply with caregivers to receive treatment. I have come to realized it is our duty as

nurses to help patient comply with treatment according to their own understanding and meaning of illness.

Recommendations

I understand that patients understand, interpret diseases in different ways, and also have the right to refuse treatment. As relationship between healthcare providers and patients are changing, even though more priority is still given to the patient. If a patient comes to death condition would they let him or her die because of his or her cultural beliefs? Even though my research was not based on that, wouldn't it be best after God if the care provider could do something to just do it. After all nurses' ethical behavior is based on ethical principals which beneficence is including. Therefore, why not do the right thing, even for once ignore the culture and save the patient.

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