

Example of information technology and nursing research paper

[Health & Medicine](#), [Healthcare](#)



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Abstract

It is worth acknowledging the fact that rise of computers and other technological innovations have transformed the face of healthcare delivery. As a result, this text seeks to highlight the scope and significance of technology within the nursing profession. It starts by appraising past and current state of information management in healthcare institutions. It then proceeds to extrapolate on the resourcefulness of information technology in medical service delivery. Finally, the reader will be made to understand both the advantages and disadvantages of integrating information technology in nursing.

Introduction

Prior to advancement of technology, healthcare facilities would keep their records in hard copies. Nurses would record patients' details on cards placed next to the patients' beds. Supposedly, such traditional means of information

handling still finds application in third world countries. In such contexts, nurses have to rely on either verbal communication or written notes in accessing relevant information while administering healthcare practices. Currently, modern healthcare facilities are using information technology tools like computers, diagnostic devices and analysis equipment in diagnosis and treatment of patients. According to Fieler (2013), innovation within the technology sector has led to development of effective tools, which allows nurses to perform their duties in a cost effective and timely manner. Instant read thermometers or electronic blood pressure gauges are example of devices which enables nurses to acquire vital information conveniently.

Significance of Technology in Nursing

With respect to importance of technology in nursing profession, it is undeniable that computers and other new medical equipment have elevated administration and execution of clinical practices. According to Marion (2010), internet access in hospitals enables nurses to instantly get in touch with information relating to treatment methodologies and pharmaceutical prescriptions. In addition, suitable computer programs designed for nursing facilitates easy and accurate medical calculations. In the past, nurses would work out medical calculations using their arithmetic skills with the help of calculators. In such cases, reliance on individual mathematical skills would normally result in errors and inaccurate findings.

Currently, medical programs can supplement accurate calculations on a disease, together with correct dosage requirements. Still on the importance of technology, synchronization of healthcare databases is instrumental in

sharing patient data and health history. Marin and Haron (2001) insinuates that in case a patient is admitted to a hospital in an unconscious state, nurses can immediately retrieve the patient's past medical records in order to ascertain the nature of treatment required. In this regard, technology is indispensable in administration of nursing practices within a healthcare institution.

Benefits of Information Technology

Having acknowledged the importance of technology in nursing, we will highlight advantages that technological tools possess in respect to healthcare administration. One advantage of computers and the internet is that it allows nurses to check for drug availability within a hospital's medicine store. " In actual practice, store keepers usually keep updating stock of drugs within their facilities" (Marion, 2010, p 21). During treatment, nurses can check for available medications. Boone (2013) says that computers usually supply such information on drugs together with their composition, uses and side effects of every drug available within the store. Apart from stock management, computers also enable nurses to keep clinical records. Storing patient's information in computers obliterates the need to wade through huge files, thus enhances faster and convenient service delivery. In practice, most hospitals have even proceeded to interconnect their clinical records with that of other healthcare institutions. Interconnection of records facilitates online acquisition of patient's information from another hospital; hence allowing nurses to know of a patient's pre-existing condition.

Disadvantages of Technology in Nursing

Despite presence of numerous benefits, use of technology in nursing also presents challenges and disadvantages. The aging nursing staff may not be thoroughly conversant with the use of computers and other technological tools. This means that wide utilization of computers in health institutions calls for training of nurses. Such trainings may require workers to take a leave for classes, thus creating a short-term unavailability of nurses in their workplaces (M. Smith, personal communication, October 14, 2013). In addition, storage of all clinical records in computers increase chances of losing the data in case of a virus attack or damage of hard drives. Furthermore, increase in cybercrime spills over to healthcare institutions. Thomas (2012) acknowledges that clinical information on patients is confidential and protected from access by unauthorized parties. However, cybercrimes like hacking may compromise on the confidentiality of information. Therefore, hospitals should reap the benefits of using computers, while at the same time taking precautions to prevent negative incidences.

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