

Developing a strategic plan to address substance abuse amongst nurses research pa...

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Background information on substance abuse in nurses

A number of conditions are believed to cause substance abuse especially among nurses. Most of the contributing factors towards substance abuse by nurses include some of the nursing specialties. Some of the specialties which have been highly associated with substance abuse among nurses include anesthesia, critical care nursing as well as the oncology and psychiatry nursing. Most of the nurses working in these specialties are believed to account for big percentages of drug abuse due to their intense emotional as well as the physical demands (Epstein, Burns, & Conlon, 2010). A number of registered nurses irrespective of their specialty have been reported to experience stresses emanating from long shifts, working overtime as well as shift in rotation. These stresses have been positively associated with the occurrences of drug abuse especially among nurses. Nurses usually need to make an internalization of their feelings in order to effectively control their emotions. Nurses are known to have emotions which lead them into causing them into engaging in drug abuse (Madrid, 1995).

Nurses in the United States are considered to be backbone of the healthcare. Nurses participate in each and every level of care. In almost all hospital departments nurse acts as the main integral part in care. Nurses with drug abuse addictions when left out to execute care can really jeopardize the care being provided to the patients as well as the general safety of the patient due to their impaired judgment cause by drug addiction (Epstein et al., 2010). A number of studies have been conducted in respect to substance abuses by nurses. Nurses may abuse a number of drugs which among them includes narcotics. These drugs they obtain through by voluntarily requesting doctors to

prescribe for them or even forging prescriptions or stealing the drug from the pharmacy. Some of the nurses even administer partial doses to patient in order to have so for them (D Dunn, 2005).

Strategic planning process

A strategic plan to address the issue of drug abuse among nurses is essential. This plan should be focused on both the nurses and the nursing students. According to statistics available, almost 10 to 20 per cent of the nurses together with the nursing students have substance abuse together with addiction problems. This presents a great challenge to the nursing fraternity which is being faced with severe shortage. Individuals have tried to address this issue through support and administering treatment and discouraging punishment on the culprits. This intervention has not been enough hence there is a high need for a more concrete plan in order to counter the vice (Monroe & Kenaga, 2011).

In the process of strategic planning, a number of stake holders need to be involved. The nursing fraternity as well as the hospital administration needs to be involved in the plan. Individuals from the drug abuse agencies as well as the teaching fraternity in the nursing school and the nursing students also need to be involved (Debra Dunn, 2005).

One of the main goals that need to be achieved is to see to it that the issue has been addressed both at the nursing school level and the hospital level. One of the broader issue that need to be considered is the fact that these nurses when they operate under the influence of drug they pose danger to the patients they are taking care of. In

order to develop an appropriate strategic plan on how to address drug abuse among nurses, it is important to conduct a SWOT analysis of the issue.\n

SWOT analysis addressing the issue of substance abuse in nurses

\nThere are a number of factors surrounding substance abuse in nurses.

These factors are grouped into both internal and external factors. Strength and weakness comprises of the internal factors that surrounds the issues of substances abuse. Opportunities and threats comprises of the external factors surrounding the issue of substance abuse (Coman & Ronen, 2009).

All the four factors in general comprises of a SWOT analysis which will be very essential when developing a strategic plan to address the issue of substance abuse among nurses.\n

Strengths

\nTwo strengths surrounding the issue of drug abuse in nurses are the facts that;\nNurses are reputable persons who are known to work in very sensitive areas in the hospitals environment\nNurses specialize in various fields especially regarding patient's care and counseling on those who abuse drugs therefore they occupy a special place where they are bale to understand very well on the issue of drug abuse.\n

Weakness

\nTwo weaknesses that can affect the coming up of an appropriate plan to address substance abuse among nurses include;\nPeriodic shortages and absenteeism of the nurses from their working area which makes it difficult for the consistence follow up of the nurses\n

Failure on the part of the nurse managers to implement and deal with work place challenges involving the nurses

\nOpportunities\nOpportunities present some of the external factors presented by the external environment. An effective strategic plan will be based on the knowledge of these opportunities.\nThere is a well-established national structure of nurses which regulate the nursing fraternity and hence influencing on the quality of nurses being released into the market for employment\nA number of nursing specialties have been established hence making the nurses to widen their knowledge and practice in various areas.\n

Threats

\nExternal environment also presents with some challenges which may threaten the strategic planning for addressing the substance abuse among nurses. Some of the threats\nLarge number of nursing students who abuse drugs and are being released from colleges and recruited in various hospitals across the country\n

Influence from other healthcare professionals which tends to influence nurses into operating illegal businesses in the healthcare system.

\nReflection on differences between weaknesses and threats\nBoth weakness and threats pose a great challenge in the developing a strategic plan to address the issue of substance abuse among nurses. Substance abuse among nurses needs to be addressed immediately. One of the main difference between weakness and threats is the fact that weakness are those internal factors that pose challenge to the plan while threats are basically

the external factors that pose challenges to the said plan to curb on nurses who abuses substances.\n\nIn this case the shortage and the failure on the part of the nursing managers are factors operating internally within an institution and need an internal intervention. The large number of incompetence nurses being released in the market and influence from other health professionals are external factors which an institution might have little or no influence on it. Both the weakness and threats present an opportunity for developing an appropriate strategic plan aimed at addressing the issue of substance abuse among nurses.\n

References

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