

# Course work on the role of nursing

Technology, Development



How has the nurse's role expanded over the last 10 years in the health care arena with respect to legal advances?

Nursing profession constantly undergoes certain changes that are conditioned by the situation in the world, the newly arising health issues and demand that exists in the society. Within the last ten years there have also been significant changes in all the aspects of profession – legal, ethical and others. In this paper I am going to analyze the change of nurses' role in the system of health care that took place recently, in particular the aspects of legal and ethical considerations.

Today nurses form the largest element of the health care providing sector. There are over three million officially registered nurses and their role today goes far beyond nursing homes and hospitals. There are many new professional opportunities being created for nurses, and today they can be travel, school, forensic nurses, etc. Because of the nursing shortages, which became an issue some time ago, nurses have learned to be independent and keep up the level of their qualification that is required in the current health care situation (Dames, 2009).

One of the general aspects, in which nursing profession underwent changes, is the education. In the past a lot of nurses didn't have the higher education, but today it is a common situation when nurses have Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral degrees. It allows to state that this health care sector is becoming more and more professional, which also ensures that expanding of the nursing role has a strong foundation as its basis. Recently Internet has also brought about significant changes in the education opportunities, which now allows pursuing online degrees in nursing. Still, there are certain doubts

regarding this type of education, as it is not completely clear whether students can get all the necessary knowledge online.

Advancements in the technological sector also allow to broaden the scope of nurses' practice, as with the new equipment certain procedures that were in the past performed only by doctors now become much easier and thus nurses start performing them on their own (Dames, 2009). This tendency is going to develop very fast, as new technologies are being invented and improved with amazing speed, which influences all aspects of people's lives. Within the last ten years the importance of documentation that nurses have to fill out and submit increased considerably, which is usually frowned upon by the representatives of the profession. They have to record every procedure they perform and report all their steps. In this way, they have less time for patients and constantly face the problem of the lack of time. This problem requires solution, but unfortunately, it is not likely to change in the nearest time.

The role of nurses also expands along with the increasing number of patients, which happens due to the rapidly aging patient population with complex medical problems they tend to experience. Furthermore, within the next ten years the physician deficit is likely to increase from 7 000 to about 100 000, which will consequently increase the demand for nurses.

In order to meet the increasing demands and tendencies, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Institute of Medicine have been meeting within the last couple of years to discuss the nurses' roles in the changing health care system (Chen, 2010). Their final report involves practical recommendations for the profession's representatives. For instance, it is

stated that the way nurses are educated. In particular, it is offered to add postgraduate clinical training and programs that are similar to the ones physicians are going through. Besides, it is recommended to increase the number of nurses with Bachelor's degrees from 50 to 80 percent, as well as double the number of Doctoral degree holders within the next 10 years. The Nursing Code of Ethics is also changing with time. Of course, its basic foundation remain the same since the American Nurses Association's Code of Ethics for Nurse was first adopted in 1950, but its certain aspects require constant changes. Usually, the code is reviewed at least once in ten years so as to meet and solve the current nurses' issues. For instance, when there are wars taking place, such problems as treatment of prisoners and human rights where topical for the nurses, and thus the Code of Ethics had to address them first of all (Orlovsky, 2006).

## References

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