

Free critical thinking on effective leadership and followership in nursing

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Introduction

Nurses are likely to come across a myriad of situations in their daily routines that will call for them to exercise their leadership capabilities. While some will adapt to these situations quite naturally, others may find the concept of leadership in this field difficult to grasp. In spite of these differences, effective leadership is an important value as it aids in the delivery of proper health care. In effect, this ensures that the patient receives the best care and fosters a healthy working environment. In an increasingly demanding working environment, leadership traits are a desirable attribute in nursing. Leadership may be defined as the process through which an individual incorporates the help of others to achieve a unified goal. In the day-to-day activities of a nurse, this could mean managing a smooth transition between shifts as well as coordinating the team responsible. The seamless change of shifts is largely dependent on the leadership skills that a nurse possesses. Even with such practices, it is important to acknowledge that leadership is quite different from management. The latter is about accomplishing tasks, while leadership is more about attitude, expertise and proper judgment, all of which are important in nursing .

There are several practices that relate to nursing as far as leadership and followership is concerned. Nurses are required to make decisions on a daily basis, especially regarding the progress made by the patients. This is done in addition to delegating tasks appropriately using select and ethical criteria. Another practice in which nurses showcase leadership skills is resolving any issues that may arise at the workplace. Followership on the other hand is the ability to be mentored by a leader. In nursing, this refers to allowing oneself

to be led by someone who not only causes the team to be motivated, but is also knowledgeable in the principles that govern nursing.

Nursing is a dynamic field, and as a result has many unforeseen circumstances. This necessitates the need to find principles which remain unchanged in spite of the constantly changing environment. One excellent way to do this is by adopting core values such as trust, integrity, humility, patience and the empowerment of other individuals, particularly those of a lower ranking under the leader. In doing this, nurses are able to accord proper care to their patients. Needless to say, the followership at this stage is authentic, and only comes naturally to the nurses. In addition, patients get treated with the dignity they deserve, improving the overall health care. There are several practical initiatives that could be put in place so as to manage the changing environments. Firstly, by placing emphasis on the role of leadership in the ward, nurses are able to manage the immediate environment for the better. This in turn, has a direct impact on the patients, thus improving patient care. Secondly, this can be achieved by ensuring that the nurses have access to the resources they need to deliver great patient care. Resources in this case, include time and equipment. The authority to do so is also a necessity as it places the nurse in charge of coordinating patient care.

Conclusion

Despite the fact that nurses play a pivotal role in proper health care, it is vital to recognize that for leadership and followership to be effective, it must occur in all the rankings of the nursing fraternity. Perhaps the biggest

challenge in doing so is striking a balance between leadership in patient care, and followership in matters business. In a bid to counter this, nurses are required to develop a conscious and deliberate effort to maintain this delicate balance in order to make patient care a priority.

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