

# Responsibility of health promotion in nursing



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Health promotion as defined by World Health Organization is “ a health strategy that aims to incorporate skills and community development and to create supportive environment for health, endeavors to build healthy public policy and looks at re-orienting health services. (WHO, 1986). Health promotion is strongly rooted in a social philosophy that attributed the etiology of ill health to adverse social conditions rather than medical care. Both theoretically and practically, health promotion has been found wanting in addressing equity and social justice concerns. Also, structurally and traditionally, the formal health system often produces major obstacles to meaningful involvement in health promotion and community empowerment activities. The communities do not have the interest and the capacity to make any tangible contribution to community participation even if they are willing to do so but the basic concepts of health promotion which have their root in ancient civilization has been developed in the last two decades.

The purpose of health education is to strengthen the skills and capabilities of individuals to take action, and the groups or communities to act collectively to take control over the determinants of health bringing about positive change It serves as essential guide in addressing the major health challenges encountered by developing and developed nations including communicable diseases and issues associated with human development and health enabling people to take action either as individuals or groups. Also, it is an avenue to encourage individuals to take preventive measures in averting worsening of an illness or disease and to adopt healthier lifestyles. Health promotion programs have proven to be an effective tool in slowing the growth of healthcare costs and reducing chance of suffering from disease

and creating supportive environments for health backed by healthy public policy. (Bennett, Perry & Lawrence, 2009).

The responsibility of a nurse in health promotion and education is considered as a major factor by numerous researchers and policy initiatives from the government to promote health, understanding that health promotion is essential. In the three journal articles selected for review from the GCU Library which incorporates the three levels of health promotion namely; primary, secondary, and tertiary, the nursing responsibilities were described to include; educating and helping people obtain skills to maintain their health, making efforts to better understand the patients and their conditions in order to provide effective care because mutual understanding between a practitioner and patient is the key to giving quality care. The nurses must have an evidence-based knowledge of the significant effect that can be made through health promotion interventions and communicate this understanding to the community at large. As more people grow in their awareness of activities that lead to good health and become knowledgeable about their own health status, the health of their families, the overall health of the population will improve. Knowing that health promotion encompasses a broader spectrum and include social and political interventions that could provide change to services and policies in the community promoting social responsibility for health, nursing roles and responsibilities have evolved in health promotion by allowing nurses to promote health in diverse settings like homes, schools, prison, general practice and workplace contrary to the past when it was limited to hospital settings only. (Watson, 2008).

The implementation of health promotion starts from setting priority , assessing needs and program planning stages, according to the journal article reviewed from GCU Library, the topic being; “ Collaboration between primary and secondary/tertiary services in oral health”, the process includes: capturing high level support by re-orienting health services , building links with primary care and reducing inequality, creating health promotion team in a way that individuals will have a role and more innovative ideas, workforce development, developing health promotion policy, collecting data that will drive the health promotion initiatives, helping to assess health interest and risks thereby helping to guide the kind of health program to offer, choosing appropriate health promotion initiatives that flow nationally from data so as to address the prevailing risk factors of the people, crafting annual health promotion so as to promote continuity, giving encouragement opportunities and rewards, maintaining leadership and innovation, communicating with everyone involved in the program throughout, monitoring regularly and consistently evaluating the outcomes. The process of executing the program must include; education of the nursing staff, education of the patients and family, screening, individual risk factor assessment and immunization, social marketing and health information, health education and skill development, community action. Settings and supportive environments,

Health education is an important factor of health promotion. As described by Naidoo and Wills (2000), the three levels of health education are: Primary prevention which is health promotion activities that prevent disease. For example immunization, it's a holistic idea of positive health that encourages the achievement and maintenance of a suitable level of health which enables

every individual to lead a productive life both socially and economically. Secondary prevention aims at shortening episode of illness or disease by hindering the progression of ill health through prompt diagnosis and treatment limiting disability. An example is screening also known as "health maintenance". It is the domain of clinical medicine. It is more expensive and less effective than primary prevention. Tertiary prevention help limit complications related to a disease or a state after it has been developed by minimizing suffering caused by existing departure from good health and promote the patients adjustment to irreversible conditions such as cardiac rehabilitation.

In line with the literature review from the GCU Library journal article, I agree with the fact that approach to health promotion should be the one that demonstrate a range of values and beliefs that are commonly held because an individual's approach will be influenced by their own beliefs and that of the profession they represent. According to Ewles and Simnett (2003), these approaches include medical approach, behaviour change approach, educational approach, e empowerment approach, and social change approach.

In conclusion, According to Ewles and Simnett(2003), theses approaches includes behavior change, medical, educational, empowerment and social change. When relating it to the literature review from the GCU library journal article approach towards health promotion should be the main focus because it reveals a range of values and beliefs that are commonly held based on an individual's approach or believe and the profession they represent.

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