

Importance of professionalism in healthcare nursing essay



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Nowadays, the word “ professionalism” is a popular issue at the leading edge of entire healthcare professions especially in the field of physiotherapy. It is presently one of the primary areas of interest as physiotherapy progresses to Vision 2020. Vision 2020 is the American Physical Therapy Association’s (APTA) established target for the future in 2020. Healthcare providers will be doctoral-level qualified, recognized by different healthcare specialists as well as patients, and will have maximum absolute access in each and every circumstances within their scope of practice in that year (APTA, 2011). Professionalism can be ascertained in several different ways and from various perspectives. According to the Dictionary of Occupational Titles, professionalism is defined as a proficiency of a clear and specific body of knowledge and contribution to that body of knowledge with an adherence to a distinct code of ethics which controls behavior via rigorous healthcare training (Dictionary of Occupational Titles, 1991). The 7 main core values of professionalism in physiotherapy stated by the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) are accountability, altruism, compassion/caring, excellence, integrity, professional duty and social responsibility as well (Swisher and Page, 2005).

The relationship between healthcare professionals and patient is intended to be therapeutic in nature as the patient has a need for technical services from healthcare professionals and the healthcare professionals are the technical experts who are qualified to help the patient. The ability for healthcare professionals to maintain the level

of professionalism is very important because this will give assurance to the patients that the healthcare professionals are in good hands. A healthcare

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professional should be able to supply a measure of support and the security of knowing what one is supposed to do (Brechin, Brown & Eby, pp 149). A healthcare professional has to find ways of handling various situations which enable them to continue to provide health care. The patient who feels that the healthcare professional has been professional is comforted and assured is beneficial for the healthcare professional to gather sufficient information and the active participation of the patient. For example, making a wise decision and speaking firmly will give a good impression on the patient and their family members. It is also important that the medical professionals should use the language that can be easily understood as jargons may work perfectly well with professionals but not patients, thus creating confusion, incorrect cases and dissatisfaction in patient. Hence, professionalism can bring trust and confidence between the healthcare professionals and the patient.

According to Miller-Keane Encyclopaedia Dictionary, the ethical norms, values, and principles that guide a profession and the ethics of decisions made within the profession are meant by professional ethics. Based on code of ethics adopted by American Physical Therapy Association (APTA), healthcare providers should be accountable in making professional judgments. This is well elaborated when a healthcare provider is thorough with professional standards, practicing up-to-date evidence-based practices, equipped with good practitioner experiences, performing within his level of expertise, valuing patients' feelings, in demonstrating independent and objective judgments when client's participating fully in all practical settings

together with good communication amongst interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary healthcare team.

Legal and professional obligations should be fulfilled by healthcare providers. They should adhere themselves to applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations. Those include having prior culpability in supervising assistants and supporting personnel, protecting clients' personal information, providing notices upon termination of provider relationships to appropriate authority, and encourage colleagues in physical and psychological aspects when they hesitate to ask for assistance in professional practices. (Code of Ethics, 2010)

It is mentioned in code of ethics that, healthcare providers shall enhance their expertise through professional behaviours. They should achieve and maintain professional competence in taking responsibilities for their professional development based on critical self-assessment and reflections especially on current changes of physiotherapy practices, education, healthcare delivery, and technology. They should evaluate applicability of updated evidence-based practices in pre, during, and post practice. They should cultivate lifelong learning and professional development.

In professional ethical practice, healthcare providers should promote organizational behaviours that benefits patients and society. They should support autonomous and accountable professional judgments, not accepting gifts and other

considerations that might influence a judgment, always being alert of documentation and coding for practice accuracy to avoid any complications, and prevent one from fulfilling professional obligations.

The major attribute of professionalism is self-improvement. Research is one of the importance ways to improve themselves. This is because research is able to gain and widen the knowledge of the healthcare professional such as the latest interventions. Knowledge is essential for reasoning and decision making which are central to professional practice (Higg, Jones, 2000, p. 24). Knowledge empowers the healthcare professional, increase their self-confidence, sense of mission and hope which is able to manage the untreatable illness (Blumenthal, 2011, pp. 254-255). According to the Paul B (2005), knowledge, skills, and behaviour need to be achieved via self-improvement in order to improve the quality of care towards the patient. These ensure the better interaction between the healthcare professional and patients especially to avoid any misunderstandings.

Self- awareness is a continuous process of noticing and exploring aspects of one self such as the psychosocial, physical and behavioural aspect with the intention of developing personal and interpersonal understanding (Burnard, 2001, p. 68). It is a very important skill and it has the ability to influence the healthcare professional. Self- awareness is significant as when they have a better understanding of themselves; they are able to make changes and hence strengthen every aspect of the healthcare professionals. This is a way to achieve the patient-centered care practice. In addition, the self-awareness is required from the healthcare professionals so to enable them to attune to patients and their experiences, concerns and interpretations of their illness.

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Thus, a close therapeutic relationship can be developed and sustained (Higg, Jones, 2000, p. 30).

Other than that, decision making for a healthcare professional is very important as there are many other alternative treatments, and as a healthcare provider, we need to choose the right treatment that has the highest probability of giving an effective treatment to the patients. Decision-making is a process of reducing any uncertainty and doubt to allow a healthcare provider to choose the best choice among them (Robert Harris, 2009).

Decision-making could be influenced by several factors. These include: clinician's goals, psychosocial skills, based of knowledge and expertise, values and beliefs, strategies for problem solving and procedural skills. Patient's characters influence the decision-making too. This closely associated with patients goals, values and beliefs, physical, education, psychosocial, and cultural factors and as well as environment factors such as clinical practice environment, overall resources, time, level of financial support and level of social support (O'Sullivan. B. S., Schmitz. J. T., 2007, pg 3).

Framework for a patient management is crucial for decision-making, as it assists to provide successful manifestation on healthcare provider plans. With a good planning ahead, an effective and efficient work could be carried out. Clear settings of aims and objectives, priorities, planning and evaluating work are those important aspects of management (Ewles. L., Simnett. I., 2003, pg149). Effective treatment on the other hand plays important roles in

the practice setting. The treatment given must be appropriate to the need of the patient and the members of the healthcare team (O'Sullivan. B. S., Schmitz. J. T., 2007, pg 4). Evidence-based practice is also being emphasized upon decision making. A successful treatment can be accomplished with the evidence-based medical practice. Data collection and analyzing on qualitative or quantitative questionnaire are done as a form of evidence-based practice. Evidence-based clinical practices protect healthcare providers from discrimination and no research-based illegitimacy. Constant reflections and practitioners' experiences provide a guideline for the healthcare professional in enhancement of service care through evidence-based clinical practices. (Ewles. L., Simnett. I., 2003, pg 129).

In a nutshell, a high standard of professionalism will benefit both healthcare providers as well as patients in the long run and it allows healthcare providers to experience a development in self-confidence together with reliability from patients, co-workers as well as most of appreciation from others (Gage, 2007). Professionalism is a fulfillment for all patients, no matter young or old. It also behooves healthcare providers to serve in a proficient manner at all times because it creates a positive effect on every single individuals involved in any circumstances. In other words, professionalism denominate the entire healthcare practices in aspects like communication and decision making by implementing the value itself onto the healthcare providers. Thus, it is essential for healthcare provider to be versatile and not to underestimate any one aspect of professionalism.

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