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RESEARCH ARTICLE

PATIENT SAFETY PRACTICES - NURSE'S CONCERN

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Abstract

The first principle with respect to the health care system is "First do no harm". The patient care process became more complex with the advancement of medical technology. The patient safety is a newer discipline in the healthcare which insists about the preventing, reducing of medical errors. Patient safety has been increasingly recognized as an issue of global importance and in 2002, WHO Member States agreed on a World Health Assembly resolution on patient safety. In recent years there has been an increasing attention on improving quality of healthcare in India within broader Universal Health Coverage (UHC) context. Patient safety has been recognised as one of the key important components of quality of care and many initiatives have been taking place at central and state levels to address diverse issues of patient safety. Challenges in patient safety in India are various, ranging from unsafe injections and biological waste management to medication and medical device safety, high rates of health care associated infections, anti-microbial resistance etc. The major vital component in quality of nursing care is said to be patient safety. Patient Safety is a shared responsibility of all the stakeholders in the health care system like physicians, Nurses, Nurse Educators, Administrators etc. The major responsibility of these stake holders is addressing the safety of the patient.

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Introduction:-

The basic and foremost need of a living being is a healthy life style. Health is considered as an important need of humans. According to WHO, Health care is one of the most unsafe industries. The errors made in this sector will affect the health and wealth of the people.

According to National Patient Safety Implementation (2018) Estimates show that in developed countries as many as 1 in 10 patients is harmed while receiving hospital care. The harm can be caused by a range of errors or adverse events. Of every 100 hospitalized patients at any given time, 7 in developed and 10 in developing countries will acquire Health Care-Associated Infections (HAIs).

It is a fundamental right of the health care to ensure the patients free from harm or potential harm associated with health care.

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Safety:

The word safety means the condition of being protected from or unlikely to cause danger, risk or injury. This means protecting a person or anything from injury or danger.

Hospital Safety:

Hospitals are one of a place where lots of people can gather which also provides care to the ill people throughout the year. Hospitals are the place which is filled with emotions, stress, anger, sad death, sorrow etc. it also gives rise to psychological disturbances like tension, irritation, frustration, conflicts etc.

Hospital safety is comprises with safety of three things like person, place and property. Place safety refers with infrastructure, fire and electrical/ mechanical safety. Property safety emphasizes about the equipments maintaining, proper storing of materials etc. people refers to staff, visitors and the patients.

Patient Safety:

Patient safety is said to be free of preventable harm to a patient while in the health care process. The concept of patient safety was present in pledges

“First to do no harm” [Hippocrates Oath]

I will abstain from whatever is deleterious and mischievous and will not take or knowingly administer any harmful drug. [Nightingale’s Pledge]

These pledges shows the importance of not to do harm the patients and also emphasizes the safety of the patient.

Patient safety and Quality care:

Patient safety is an important factor for an effective health care system where quality prevails.

Safety	Quality
It means doing lack of harm	Effective and Purposeful care at right time
It focuses on avoiding bad events	Focuses on doing things well
It helps to reduce the mistake	Raises the roof of overall care for better care

Why Patient Safety is Important:

According to WHO, Patient Safety and Risk Management Service delivery and Safety – Sep 2019

Fact 1: One in every 10 patients is harmed while receiving hospital care

Fact 2: The occurrence of adverse events due to unsafe care is likely one of the 10 leading causes of death and disability across the world

Fact 3: Four out of every 10 patients are harmed in primary and outpatient health care

Fact 4: At least 1 out of every 7 Canadian dollars is spent treating the effects of patient harm in hospital care

Fact 5: Investment in patient safety can lead to significant financial savings

Fact 6: Unsafe medication practices and medication errors harm millions of patients and costs billions of US dollars every year

Fact 7: Inaccurate or delayed diagnosis is one of the most common causes of patient harm and affects millions of patients

Fact 8: Hospital infections affect up to 10 out of every 100 hospitalized patients

Fact 9: More than 1 million patients die annually from complications due to surgery

Fact 10: Medical exposure to radiation is a public health and patient safety concern

Patient safety goal:

Joint Commission International (JCI) has given goals for patient safety they are

1. Proper identification of patient
2. Upgrading the communication skills
3. Enhancing the use of safe medications
4. Alleviate the risk of hospital acquired infection
5. Minimise the risk of falls

Measures to Implement Goals:

1. Using minimum of two identifiers of patients when providing care, treatment or any other services.
2. To eradicate transfusion errors with respect to misidentification of patient.
3. Reporting critical results of tests and diagnostic procedures on a timely basis.
4. Medications and its containers should be labelled properly.
5. Information regarding medications taken by patients should be communicated properly
6. Clinical alarms should be placed and maintained properly
7. Evidence based practices should be implemented to prevent health care associated infections.

Nurses Role in implementing Goals:

Minimum two identifiers like patient name, father's name, date of birth, patient ID or mother's name can be used.

Before starting blood transfusion check physician order, two person verification process also to be done.

Medications and its containers should be labelled as soon as it is prepared with name, strength and amount of solution.

Discard the medication if it not labelled properly.

If patient in anticoagulant therapy use approved protocols, monitor for drug interactions, provide education regarding safety practices.

Obtain proper history on medication what the patient takes at present and provide written form regarding medication information when patient gets discharge from hospital.

All the hospital staffs should be educated about the best practices for preventing Multi drug resistant organisms, blood stream infections related with central line, catheter associated infection etc..

Preventing Medical Errors by Patient:

1. Make sure that doctor knows all your medications that he is taking
2. Showing all your medications and supplements to the doctor while visiting him
3. Inform doctors about your allergies to drug or any specific things
4. Ask information about your prescribed drugs
5. Make sure that you can read the prescription
6. Make sure with pharmacist that you got your correct prescribed drug

Common type of Error:

The most common types of errors made in clinical side are

1. Medication error
2. Equipment related injuries
3. Falls
4. Improper communication
5. Hospital acquired infection
6. Surgical Safety

Types of Safety:

The most common types of patient safety are

1. Environmental Safety
2. Medical Safety
3. Surgical Safety
4. Infection control/ BMW Safety
5. Blood Safety

Nurses Role in Patient safety:

Of all the members of the health care team, nurses therefore play a critically important role in ensuring patient safety by monitoring patients for clinical deterioration, detecting errors and near misses, understanding care processes and

weaknesses inherent in some systems, and performing countless other tasks to ensure patients receive high-quality care.

Environmental Safety:

1. Maintaining Adequate Light and Ventilation in the wards
2. Equip the stairs with hand rails which helps to hold
3. Floors should be kept wet and slip preventing floor is advised.
4. Fire extinguishers and fire alarm will be placed in each floor with proper holdings
5. Noise pollution should be avoided.
6. Beds should be Heavy and fixed
7. Wheel chairs and trolleys should be kept locked
8. No water lodging in toilets
9. Call system should be kept nearby bed and also easily reachable to patient

Medical Safety:

1. Identification of patient should be done with correct name
2. Prescription by doctors should be legible and understanding hand writing
3. While administering IV fluids – In Drip sets Air bubble to be removed, Over hydration should be monitored
4. Oxygen flow should be monitored properly
5. Proper handing over and taking over during shift change should be done nearby patient or patient room.
6. Identification of Look alike and Sound alike medications

Surgical Safety:

1. Explain the patient about procedure and get proper consent
2. Proper identification of patient with wrist band containing name, identity number and name of surgery
3. Proper identification of operating part marking and area should be cleaned properly
4. Pre anaesthetic check-up should be done by head to toe assessment
5. Ensuring no foreign body left inside by proper counting of instruments, sponges etc
6. Prevention of surgical wound infections by providing wound care by sterile dressing

Blood Safety:

1. Proper grouping and cross matching should be done before administering
2. Tests of HIV, Viral Infections should be done and certificate should be verified
3. Inform adverse reactions to blood transfusion if any to physician.

Infection Control and BMW Safety:

1. Proper segregation and Transportation of Bio Medical Waste
2. Maintaining sanitation of wards to avoid infection
3. Using sterile procedures.
4. Formation of Hospital Infection Control Committee to reduce the nosocomial infection
5. Using proper hand washing techniques and Personal Protective Equipments while giving care to the patients.

Steps taken by Government of India for ensuring Patient Safety especially in Public Hospitals and National Health Program:

1. National Quality Assurance Programme for Public Health Facilities. For ensuring quality of services
2. Indian Public Health Standards (IPHS) also provide the norms for the Infrastructure and Disaster preparedness.
3. Infection management and environment plan (IMEP) guidelines - For better implementation of infection prevention practices, and also for bio-medical waste management.
4. AEFI (Adverse Event following Immunization) guidelines help to take appropriate actions vaccine safety under immunization programme.
5. Maternal and Newborn Health tool kit - For safe care of pregnant women, especially in labour room and maternity wards, which includes WHO Safe Birthing Checklist.

Conclusion:-

Patient safety is the major keystone of high-quality health care. Much of the work specifying practices on patient safety may prevent harm has been focused on negative outcomes of care, such as mortality and morbidity. Nurses are judgmental to the observation and coordination may reduce such adverse outcomes. Remaining of work related to patient safety practices will be in assessing the effect of nursing care on positive quality indicators, like appropriate self-care and other measures of improved health status.

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