How to Talk to Doctors- a Guide for Effective Communication by Curtis K., Tzannes A., Rudge, T.

Published in International Nursing Review (2011) Volume 58 pp. 13-20

Summary and Discussion of Nursing Implications

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February 26, 2014
Introduction

Nursing is a collaborative practice and it involves exchange of information every minute. Effective Communication is what makes best nursing care possible. Good nursing means nothing if communication is ineffective and failing. Nurses are, above all, the communication bridges between clients and doctors, between clients and the family members. The purpose of this paper is to summarize, discuss and study nursing implications outlined in the article, *How to Talk to Doctors- a guide for effective communication* by Curtis, Tzannes, and Rudge. Using College of Nurse of Ontario’s literature and Registered Nurse Association of Onatario’s *Best Practice Guidelines*, and other credible sources the essay will explore ways to achieve best possible client care through effective communication by analyzing and studying important nursing implications. Along with these, the essay will discuss my personal opinions on the research findings. It will also substantiate on how the essay and this research writing exercise will positively impact and enrich my future nursing practices in a clinical settings.

Summary of the key points of the Article

The article, focuses on Citing many research works from sources like Medline, CINAHL, and SCIRUS, the article, *How to Talk to Doctors- a guide for effective communication* studies various causes or various obstacles to effective communication, and it provides strong recommendations or strategies to improve communication doctors. Today’s health care setting of a nurse or a is a huge test of communication and ineffective communication has huge implications upon nursing practices, client care, and nurse’s own self image (Curtis K., Tzannes, A., Rudges, T., 2011 pp. 13-20).
The authors, Curtis, Tzanne, and Trudge point there are barriers to effective communication between nurse and doctors that one needs to be aware of. First is traditional hierarchical relationship that a nurse has with doctor puts the nurse in difficult position to assert and communicate effectively. A study by Fagin and Garelicke (2004) finds nurses have difficulty giving voice that is contrary to doctor’s opinions or orders and a sense of discomfort in challenging a higher authority in a in doctor cause communication barrier (Curtis et.al., 2011).

Secondly, the increased workloads mean less time for each patients and less efficient assessment and less effective communication. Thirdly, mobile workforce environment with new interns and many changing faces in the team means shorter time for effective communications to happen. Fourthly, nurse’s prior bad experiences with other health care team members including doctors act as current barriers towards effective communication with others. Only way to combat the ineffective communication in the health care team is combat these barriers which can be achieved through exercise of self- reflection, preparedness, and assertiveness on the part of the nurses (Curtis, et al., 2011).

**Nursing Implications**

Nursing is a team work. Ineffective communication will have many nursing implications. It will affect the care delivery, collaboration with other health care team members, and empowerment of the clients. Poor communication and communication breakdown are shown to have direct bearings with the client care and outcome. Among many nursing implications that can be noted from this research exercise, three key implications I find from this article that are noteworthy are the importance of self reflection or self analysis; the importance of preparation; and the importance of using structured communication technique as ways to enhance one’s
communication skill in a clinical settings, there by become better advocate for the clients (Curtis, et al., 2011).

*Importance of Self Reflection to combat ineffective communication:* Firstly, to be an effective communicator, nurse has to be aware of one’s own strengths and limitations through self-reflection. One must be mindful of one’s own mental state of being and ponder on how one’s own emotional balance might affect one’s communication with the doctors and other health care providers. This also means one has to be cognizant of other’s state of mind and stressors that affect one’s communication tone and style and try to be adaptive, bearing in mind the team’s common goal and not be pestered by petty misunderstandings through miscommunication. All these can be best achieved if the nurse learns to control one’s own anxiety and approach doctor’s interview more positively and thereby contribute to a better team’s decision that will benefit the client’s well being and nurse own self image. Self reflection will also help in balancing one’s emotions from prior experiences –which could become barrier to effective communication - not get in the way of current experiences with health care team members. (Curtis, et al., 2011).

To this end, College of Nurse of Ontario stresses on the importance of self-assessment as an important part of quality assurance program towards continuing competence. The college calls for the nurse to be accountable to one’s own professional growth to become better nurse which can be achieved through self-reflection (CNO, 2006). Also, to establish therapeutic relationship with the client, the nurse are required to do reflective practice which involves the the practice of self-awareness and self-knowledge (RNAO, 2006).
Importance of Being Prepared and the use of Structured Communication Technique:

Secondly, nursing involves collaboration with the doctors and other care providers to optimally benefit the client’s best interest. The nursing implication of being unprepared is hesitation, ineffective communication, and thereby ineffective decision making and bad advocacy of the client. One way to avoid ineffective communication is the use of structured technique like the use of ISBAR. ISBAR stands for introduction, situation, background, assessment and recommendation. Using this technique has been very effective and a study done in Australia has validated its efficacy to bring greater clarity to clinical based communication (Marshal, Harrison, Flannaga 2009).

Thirdly, one could imply from the article about the importance of assertiveness in the nurse.

Conclusions

This paper aims to have an in-depth understanding of various challenges of communication in a health care team especially between nurse and doctor. Good nursing, after all, boils down towards an effective communication. I find this research exercise very rewarding. I hope this will greatly enrich my understanding about the importance of effective communication, and I will especially note the importance of being self reflective, prepared, competent through continuing education. The author’s point of view does make sense to me. I have enriched my knowledge about the importance and ways to become a better and more effective communicator when taking care of my clients. This knowledge will have far reaching impacts upon my future nursing practice as well. With all these positive remark, I would like point out I find it bit unfair on the part of the authors of the main article to call only the nurses
and not the doctors to take steps to improve the communication. It should be a two way recommendations, doctors should equally be held accountable. Other than that this research exercise is, by far, one of the most is a rewarding research writing experience.

References


