

Communication Paper

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N101: Foundations of Nursing

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October 7, 2024

Therapeutic communication is the purposeful use of communication to establish and maintain supportive relationships with patients, families, and significant others. It is a key part of nursing that allows nurses to interact with patients in a meaningful way, helping to address both their emotional and physical needs. This type of communication is important because it improves patient outcomes, reduces anxiety, and promotes trust and cooperation during care. For therapeutic communication to be most effective, the environment is an important factor. A private, quiet, comfortable space with good lighting can help both the patient and nurse focus on the conversation, free from distractions. In such an environment, patients are more likely to feel safe and open up about their concerns, while nurses can give their full attention to understanding the patient's needs. As a nurse acknowledging the importance of therapeutic communication and the ideal environment for its practice, it is essential to explore specific techniques that can improve nurse-patient interactions, ultimately leading to better patient outcomes.

Analysis of Therapeutic Techniques

Therapeutic communication techniques are important skills for nurses to effectively interact with patients. Two key verbal therapeutic communication techniques are open-ended questions and clarifying. Open-ended questions require more than a simple "yes" or "no" answer, prompting patients to share more detailed information. This technique is important because it elicits deeper insights into the patient's feelings and experiences, which can then strengthen the nurse-client relationship. For example, when a patient is feeling overwhelmed by the information provided about their condition, asking, "What concerns do you have about your treatment plan?" encourages them to express their thoughts openly. This technique is best used in situations where patients may be hesitant to share, allowing them to express their emotions and concerns fully.

Clarifying is a skill that helps patients put their unclear thoughts or ideas into words, ensuring mutual understanding. This technique is important for effective communication, as it prevents misinterpretation of the patient's statements. For example, if a patient expresses confusion about their medication dosage, the nurse might say, "Can you explain what you understand about the dosage of medication to take?" This approach not only helps clarify the patient's understanding but also demonstrates the nurse's commitment to ensuring the patient's comprehension. Clarifying is beneficial in situations where complex medical information is being discussed, allowing patients to understand important details.

When it comes to communication there is the chance of potential barriers that can alter the patient's ability to send, receive, and or comprehend messages. One barrier to effective communication is hearing impairments. Patients with hearing difficulties may struggle to understand verbal instructions or express their needs, leading to frustration and confusion. For example, if a nurse gives verbal instructions to a patient without realizing they have a hearing impairment, the patient may miss crucial information about their care plan.

In addition to verbal techniques, non-verbal communication also plays an important role in improving therapeutic interactions. Facial expressions and touch are two essential non-verbal techniques. Facial expressions can show emotions and understanding at the same time reinforce verbal communication by adding emotional context to the words being spoken, enhancing the emotional connection between the nurse and the patient. A smile can communicate support and compassion, making patients feel more comfortable about expressing their feelings. For example, when a patient shares their fears about a diagnosis, a compassionate facial expression from the nurse can reassure the patient that their feelings are valid and understood.

Appropriate touch can also provide comfort and reassurance, reinforcing verbal communication. A soft touch on the shoulder or hand can express empathy and create a sense of connection. For example, when a patient is feeling anxious before a procedure, a reassuring touch can help calm their nerves. When used appropriately, touch improves the therapeutic relationship and supports the patient's emotional well-being.

Reflection

Effective communication is essential in nursing, and understanding my personal strengths and weaknesses can help me grow in this area. When it comes to my strengths in effective communication, I feel that I do a great job at maintaining eye contact and using appropriate body language, which help create a welcoming atmosphere for my patients. I consider myself a good listener and would say that I actively listen at all times because I genuinely care for everyone I encounter. This quality helps me build rapport with patients. However, I also recognize some weaknesses. I often feel shy and nervous when first meeting a patient, which can make it challenging to establish rapport initially. Once I become more comfortable and confident, I can connect more effectively. Additionally, I sometimes struggle to focus my patients when they start to ramble, as I tend to hesitate to interrupt them.

With that being said, some ways that I can improve my interpersonal communication skills include, working on starting interactions with more confidence and reducing my shyness. This will help me build rapport from the beginning of the conversation. I also intend to gently guide patients back to the main topic when they start to ramble, recognizing that it is perfectly okay to refocus the discussion, even if it feels awkward. Additionally, I will focus on improving my clarity of speech, as I sometimes come across as quieter when I'm feeling shy.

I anticipate facing challenges when implementing effective communication techniques, especially in situations that make me feel nervous or uncomfortable. I may enter rooms where I feel anxious about the care I need to give, but I understand the importance of staying professional and unbiased. My goal is to provide the best client-centered care possible, regardless of my initial feelings. To manage this, I will remind myself to focus on the patient's needs and my job as a nurse.

What I have learned about therapeutic communication will significantly impact my nursing care. By using different types of verbal and non-verbal communication techniques, I can remain professional even in situations where I may feel uneasy. This skill will help me create a supportive environment for my patients, allowing for better relationships and improving their overall experiences.

Conclusion

In conclusion, therapeutic communication is a very important part of nursing that involves purposeful interactions to build supportive relationships with patients. Through techniques such as open-ended questions and clarifying, along with the effective use of non-verbal communication like facial expressions and touch, nurses can enhance their interactions and establish trust with their patients. Recognizing potential barriers, such as hearing impairments, is also crucial for ensuring effective communication and delivering quality care to all patients. Reflecting on my strengths, such as maintaining eye contact and being an active listener, alongside acknowledging areas for improvement, like overcoming initial shyness and managing patient rambling, has been important in my personal growth and will continue to be. By working on my confidence and speaking clearly, I can improve client-centered care and provide the best care possible. Ultimately, what I have learned about therapeutic communication

will continue to impact my nursing practice. It will allow me to provide compassionate, client-centered care that meets the diverse needs of those I encounter. By continually working on these skills, I aim to contribute positively to patient experiences and outcomes, reinforcing the important role of effective communication in nursing every day of my future career.