

Communication paper Importance of Therapeutic Communication

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Therapeutic communication is the ability to encourage patients to express their thoughts and feelings in a space that is comfortable and non-judgmental, through ways of verbal and non-verbal communication. Therapeutic communication is a crucial skill to the nursing profession because as nurses we need to know how to communicate with clients effectively, so we provide the best holistic care possible to satisfy all client's needs individually. Two factors that make up an ideal environment best suited for effective communication are privacy and comfort. Comfort is how the patient feels, placing them in a space that'll put them at ease, reduce anxiety/ fear, be at a comfortable temperature, and be free of pain plays a role in how comfortable the patients feel. Communication is enhanced in a comfortable setting. Privacy is being in a space where clients feel comfortable sharing personal information without the fear of being overheard by others, which helps with promoting open-ended questions that will be helpful to providing overall holistic care. Therapeutic communication is one of the main uses of communication in healthcare used to build and maintain healthy appropriate relations with clients and family, using multiple techniques such as open-ended questions, proper body language and facial expressions, and so forth all play a role in how effectively clients will understand their care plan and goals.

Analysis Technique of Therapeutic communication

One technique of verbal therapeutic communication is the use of open-ended questions. These types of questions allow us healthcare professionals to get more in-depth with our clients doing the interview phase of care. Open-ended questions allow us to ask questions that require more than just a yes or no answer, clients can give more details about their thoughts and feeling concerning their health which ties into providing care holistically as a whole rather than just caring for a medical diagnosis. This technique elicits more information which helps to strengthen the nurse-client relationship. I chose this technique because I feel as though it is one of the main

crucial ones since it's used in all aspects of healthcare not just the nursing profession. This technique is best utilized during the interview phase when a lot of data is being collected about the client. After the use of AIDET, nurses communicate by asking questions to form that nurse-client relationship, gather data, and form a plan of care for clients based on their individual needs, and personal goals. It's best to start non-direct with closed-ended questions and build up to open-ended. For example, if a client were to come in and say they've been feeling sick the past three days an appropriate therapeutic question to ask would be "Can you tell me more about how you've been feeling?" this type of question is an open-ended question which will help our client to elaborate and give key details on how they've been feeling, which will be helpful to guide the rest of the interview questions.

Another technique of verbal therapeutic communication is clarifying/restating. This technique is used to ensure that we as nurses understand what the client is trying to tell us. Clarifying with clients in our own words is helpful to the client since it allows them to rehear what they said and connect unclear thoughts or further ask questions. I chose this technique because reclarifying is always important and helps to prevent errors and misconceptions. Restate what the client told you in your own words gives the client a chance to correct you if something was misunderstood or miscommunicated. Restating also shows the client that you were actively listening and that you care about what they have to say. This technique is very helpful during the interview phase as well before concluding restating what the client had expressed to see if what you noted is accurate or if the client has anything else they'd like to share. A barrier to effective communication with clients and family would be the use of medical jargon. Medical terminology is a common barrier between healthcare workers and clients. As nurses, we're familiar with the terms, but as for a client whose education levels aren't as high or isn't familiar with the lingo will

only cause more confusion and fear to ask further questions due to the fact, they don't want to seem uneducated.

Although there are a lot of effective verbal communication techniques there are also plenty of non-verbal therapeutic communication techniques. Non-verbal communication is a way of communicating with the absence of words, this type makes up 80% of communication that takes place. Non-verbal occurs face-to-face, it strengthens and emphasizes verbal communication. For non-verbal communication to be therapeutic it must be congruent with verbal communication, words should match face and body language. An example of a non-verbal therapeutic technique is maintaining eye contact with clients while they are speaking. The use of eye contact shows clients that you are engaged and actively listening to what he or she is saying. Eye contact ties in with the verbal techniques talked about previously maintaining that eye contact after asking an open-ended question shows that you care and want to know how the client feels. Another example of a non-verbal technique is the use of body language and facial expressions. Having a polite smile and an engaged look on your face provides a comfortable and welcoming atmosphere for clients. Having a bad posture shows the client that you don't care and would rather be somewhere else. This will discourage them to from sharing which may result in miss information that would be critical to their care.

Reflection

Personally, I have my own strength and weaknesses when it comes to effectively communicating. I'm known to be a very shy, reserved person, and overall not the best communicator. One thing I believe would be a weakness for me as far as communicating is the ability to redirect clients in a therapeutic way without coming off as harsh or rude. I don't want to just cut them off mid-sentence, I know in my nursing career I'm going to need to learn how to

improvise to stay on topic with my clients. My facial expression and body language is also something I'm sure I'll struggle with when it comes to therapeutic communication. I often may have like a straight resting face making me look uninterested but I'm just processing everything being said in a way for me to remember. A lot of times I may also lean on a chair or wall which may seem impatient to a client but it's always because either my back is hurting, or my feet are killing me. My strengths may include verbal communication such as asking good direct and non-direct questions, the use of silence to allow my clients time to process thoughts and emotions and being a good active listener are all things I know I can do with ease when it comes to communicating. During my clinical experience so far, I noticed that I am very good with eye contact when communicating with either the clients or others on the care team. With appropriate eye contact I saw how everyone were kept engaged and focus on what I had to say. My communication skills need some improvement and it's important that I work on some techniques to improve them since its something I will be using throughout the entirety of my nursing career. Some steps I will take to improve my interpersonal communication skills is getting more exposure during my clinical experience and noticing how other care member conduct themselves with the clients and implement some of those therapeutic techniques into my own way of communicating. Another way I will improve my communication skills is by always putting myself in a position to speak to clients and build that nurse-client relationship, having a close professional relationship with my clients will help me to know them better and see what skills I will need to implement in communicating that will be most effective for everyone's individual needs.

Communication is different for everyone that comes to the hospital it's normal to anticipate challenges but also know ways to work around them. For examples language barriers

and health conditions are challenges to effective communication. I will implement all I have learned in class to work around these challenges such as the use of a medical interpreter like Elaina to help surpass those language barriers to ensure my clients feels valued. The use of a of medical devices like hearing aids will be used to help clients that are hearing impaired, and the use of written information will also be very helpful for these types of clients. I will have my clients use teach back to ensure that they understand the message conveyed to them or if they have any question. What I have learned will have a great impact on my nursing career. Now I know how to effectively communicate and conduct myself in a professional manner, this way it's easy for my clients to trust in the care I plan on providing them.

Conclusion

In conclusion therapeutic communication is a key aspect in healthcare, aiming to provide good holistic care to all patients using numerous of techniques to effectively communicate as stated above. Some key takeaways to consider include eye contact when speaking, and restating what clients expressed. The use of verbal and nonverbal communication is often used interchangeably but the key thing is to always make sure that what is being said is congruent with what your body and facial expressions is expressing. Major factors to consider when communicating is the comfort and privacy of clients. Without these two factors it will be hard for a client to open to you in a way you would like. The use of the interview phase is a key time to establish that relationships with clients so when it comes to questions, they are comfortable and at ease.